THE

DISTILLERIES CONSIDERED,

IN THEIR CONNECTION WITH THE

AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE, AND REVENUE OF BRITAIN;

ALSO,

IN THEIR EFFECTS UPON THE HEALTH, TRANQUILLITY, AND MORALS OF THE PEOPLE.

EDINBURGH:

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THE DISTILLERIES CONSIDERED, &c.

THE labour of the harveſt is now completed, the crop is found to be abundant, and no apprehenſion is entertained that either accident or deſign can deprive this country of plenty for the enſuing year.

The crop of the preceding year was known to be defective; and the apprehenſion of ſcarcity was for ſome time ſo prevalent, as to engage the attention of government; and their interpoſition was thought neceſſary to ward off the impending danger.

Amongſt the various plans adopted for that purpoſe, none met with more general approbation than the entire ſtop which was put to the diſtillation of ſpirits from grain, and the application of the corn found in the granaries of the diſtillers to the relief of the public.

This ſuſpenſion of diſtillation was continued for a conſiderable time; and many perſons, reſpectable for their rank, abilities, and attention to the intereſts of their country, having carefully obſerved the ſtate of the community during that period, have formed a decided opinion, that it would be for the intereſt of ſociety that the diſtilleries were entirely aboliſhed; or, if that cannot be done, that they ſhould be ſo deeply taxed as to render ſpirits ſo high priced as

to force the common people to diſcontinue the uſe of them; the effect of which would be, that they would become more ſober, induſtrious, and peaceable. Such ideas will be allowed their full weight with every man of ſenſe; and, if they are well founded, muſt be concluſive. When the induſtry, tranquillity, and morals of a great people, are connected with, or may be affected by any particular object, they give to that object ſuch magnitude and importance, that it becomes immediately an object of anxious and general inveſtigation; and ſociety is indebted to ſuch perſons as would guard its intereſt in theſe moſt important concerns.

But though this is true, yet, in an enlightened age and commercial country, a man of good ſenſe is not to be miſled by opinions haſtily formed, however popular, nor by opinions originating in a partial view of circumſtances, or founded upon narrow principles, which will not ſtand the teſt of a fair examination. Every propoſition reſpecting agriculture, manufactures, commerce, politics, or morals, is conſidered by him deliberately, in its evidences, its relations, and effects; not as connected merely with private emolument, but as it embraces the large idea of general good; not as affecting only the narrow intereſts of the landholder, the huſbandman, the manufacturer, or the merchant, but as exhibiting the great principles of public utility. Theſe are conſiderations, which give importance to any propoſition; and if, upon theſe principles, I ſaw reaſon to be of opinion that the diſtilleries ought to be diſ-

couraged or ſuppreſſed, I would rejoice in every exertion for accompliſhing that end; and I would conſider the late efforts of the landholders of Mid-Lothian for that purpoſe, as highly meriting the applauſe of their country.

For my own part, I am not a landholder, a merchant, nor a manufacturer, nor a farmer; I am, therefore, unbiaſſed by any of their intereſted views: But I have leiſure to obſerve; and I reflect upon the objects which paſs before me in review. I have formed an opinion upon the ſubject of the diſtilleries very different from the one above mentioned; and, as I think my ſentiments are founded upon juſt principles, and eſtabliſhed by facts, I take the liberty to lay them before the public, being perſuaded that the importance of the ſubject itſelf will engage the attention of every one, eſpecially of thoſe who are chiefly intereſted in it.

The object I have in view is comprehended under this plain propoſition, That the diſtillation of ſpirits from grain is advantageous to the *agriculture*, the *commerce*, and *revenue* of this country. After illuſtrating this propoſition, I ſhall ſtate fully my ideas of the effects of the diſtilleries upon the *health*, *tranquillity*, and *morals* of the people.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

Before I proceed to proſecute this ſubject, it is proper to premiſe, that, in the preſent ſtate of ſo-

ciety in Britain, ſpirits are become one of the neceſſaries of life, and muſt be ſomehow provided.

There is no obſervation more certain, than that the external circumſtances of a people chiefly form their habits. Theſe habits form their characters; and their habits, and the characters ariſing from them, become ſo interwoven with their conſtitutions, that an attempt to change them would be as unavailing as an attempt to alter the original frame and conſtitution of their minds.

In early ages, mens minds were uncultivated, and their wants were few; but an increaſe of knowledge multiplied their deſires, and the means of gratifying them; and the habits of gratification ſoon claſſed theſe objects of pleaſure amongſt the neceſſaries of life. This has ſuperinduced an univerſal change upon the face of ſocicty. Our deſires have increaſed with our knowledge; our knowledge has perfected the arts; the arts have introduced riches; and our riches have furniſhed that train of luxuries which ſo much characterize the preſent age. It is accordingly to be obſerved, that, even in thoſe ranks of life wherein men formerly ſought merely to live, they now look not only for the neceſſaries, but to the conveniences, and even beyond theſe, to the luxuries of life. And though it may poſſibly be deemed true, that the higher ranks of ſociety, leaving the ſimplicity of their fathers, have refined even upon luxury itſelf, yet it is equally obvious that the inferior orders have greatly advanced therein; ſo that what ſome years ago was reckoned ſuperfluous, is at

this time eſteemed neceſſary; and what was formerly not ſo much as known, is now ardently purſued. In this manner, the uſe of ſtrong liquors of every kind has become prevalent; and no rank is exempted from the deſire of this indulgence. It is eſpecially ſeen from experience, that amongſt us ſpirituous liquors are diſtinguiſhed as affording a beverage congenial to a northern climate; and the deſire of them is become ſo ſtrong, and the habits reſpecting them are ſo formed, that men will not eaſily be perſuaded to relinquiſh them. Agreeably to this account, we have ſeen, that, when the art of diſtillation was leaſt known and practiſed in this country, the Highlanders of Scotland, even when their imperfect knowledge of huſbandry could hardly ſupply them one half of the year with corn for bread, even then they braved the danger of want itſelf; they manufactured their ſcanty pittance of barley into malt; and, when they almoſt knew nothing elſe, they became knowing in diſtillation. In the mean time, all the reſt of Britain was filled with brandy from France, and gin from Holland. No attention, no prohibition, no high duties, prevented their importation, or their being ſmuggled into this country, and, of conſequence, their being ſold at a price *within the reach of the loweſt orders of ſociety*. They were found in every corner for ſale; they were the never-failing companions of every ſocial meeting; and they were employed, though often improperly, to ſtrengthen the weak, and conſole the miſerable in private.

In this ſituation this country continued until the

increaſing knowledge of diſtillation, and indeed of the true principles of commerce, by encouraging our home manufacture, nearly excluded theſe foreign ſpirits from our market. But this did not leſſen the demand for ſpirits themſelves; ſtill they are ſought for with avidity, as one of the comforts of life; and whilſt the inferior claſs of men find in their hands a balance from the fruits of their labours, above what is neceſſary for their daily ſupport, they will not be denied the happineſs of the ſocial hour, to which theſe by long habits adminiſter. Their empire is eſtabliſhed; and were government diſpoſed to interpoſe to deſtroy it, their interpoſition would be in vain. The ſons of the north will not be denied this gratification.

AGRICULTURE.

I NOW proceed to take a view of the influence which the diſtillation of ſpirits from grain has had, or may have, upon the agricultural intereſts of Great Britain.

It is obviouſly true that great improvements of late years have been made in agriculture; improvements which have been attended with infinite advantage, and do great honour to our country. The diſtillers, it is well known, have been aiding to the commencement of theſe improvements, to their eſtabliſhment, and their extenſion. I will not indeed ſay that all the diſtillers have greatly exerted them-

ſelves in the inveſtigation of the principles of agriculture, or in exhibiting plans of great and ſpirited improvements; but, in order to be uſeful, they were not under that neceſſity. They fed a great number of cattle and hogs upon their grains and dreg; this produced a great quantity of manure. Without, therefore, inveſtigation or reſearch, they were in ſome meaſure compelled, from their circumſtances, to apply their attention to the large profits offered them from agriculture; and the conſequence was, that, with a very partial knowledge of the ſubject, they became tackſmen of the lands around them. By means of their command of manure, they cultivated the nicer and richer ſpecies of grain; they produced large crops; the quality of their corn was ſuperior; and they were ſucceſsful in every attempt. Their neighbours were aſtoniſhed at their ſucceſs, and felt the ſpirit of emulation ſtir within them. They ſaw what their ſoil, what their climate could produce. They were inſtigated to bold attempts after improvement. They cleaned and cultivated their fields with greater care; they became attentive to the regular rotation of their crops; they became careful in the collection, and more ſkilful in the application of manure; they laboured with animating hope, and their hopes were not diſappointed. Hence it has been obſerved, that wherever a diſtillery has been eſtabliſhed, the country around it has rapidly improved, and that not only within the reach of the diſtilleries, but to a much greater extent.

Thus far do we ſee the example ſet by the diſtil-

lers improving the rural economy of the country. But it is not to this I would principally call the attention of the reader. We do not now ſtand ſo much in need of example. Our farmers are a claſs of men more fully educated; their minds are more enlarged; and the beauty and fertility of our fields continually tell us, that they are cultivated by men of information. But, beſides this, it may be obſerved, that the diſtilleries are particularly recommended, by affording to the farmer a more *certain* and *better market for his grain.*

To animate the huſbandman, and give energy to his exertions, has ever been an important object of patriotiſm in every enlightened age. The legiſlature of this country, from time immemorial, has laboured anxiouſly for that purpoſe. To promote it, the corn laws, in all their various changes, have been deviſed. The firſt and moſt neceſſary thing for ſecuring that object, was to provide the huſbandman a certain market for his grain; the ſecond was to afford him a price adequate to his rent, the expence of labour, the maintenance of his family, and a premium for his capital, induſtry and knowledge.

For theſe purpoſes, in certain circumſtances, importation of grain has been prohibited, and exportation encouraged by a bounty; for the exportation market has always been thought ſufficient to enſure the activity and ſucceſs of the huſbandman; and the meaſure of our agricultural proſperity has always been reckoned by the quantity of grain we have been enabled to ſend to foreign markets. But, with-

out entering into any diſcuſſion concerning the policy of our preſent corn laws, it appears to me that it is bad policy to export corn from a manufacturing country, if it can be conſumed by its inhabitants, or if the corn itſelf can be made the ſubject of a profitable manufacture. But at any rate, it is an allowed principle, that the huſbandman muſt be provided with a market for his produce: if it lies upon his hands unſold, the ſpirit of his induſtry muſt ſink at once; for this to him would be almoſt equal to the deſtruction of the ſhaking winds or rotting rains, for his labours would be equally in vain. The apprehenſion of the continual demands of his farm and his family, and alſo the certain periodical demands of his landlord, would hover around his imagination like deſtruction. He would look unthankful even at his fruitful fields: for, in that caſe, to him they would be fruitful in vain; and he would ſcarce be perſuaded to recommence his labours.

Notwithſtanding the opinion which has long prevailed, it is certain that the foreign market affords not an adequate remedy for this evil. The foreign market is always uncertain. A general plenty may put a ſtop to the demand. Corn is always exported at an inferior price; and it is only in times of plenty that exportation is permitted. Exportation is invariably attended with a great expence. The land carriage, the corn merchant, the ſailor, the inſurance broker, and underwriter, all muſt be paid; and the price in the foreign market muſt be high indeed, to afford, with ſuch deductions, a ſufficient

price to the farmer. Such diſcouragements muſt ſlacken, therefore, his exertions, and make him fearful of extending his cultivation.

Mark now what a change is introduced by the eſtabliſhment of proſperous diſtilleries. The diſtiller comes forward to the huſbandman, and ſays to him, I come betwixt you and all theſe difficulties and diſcouragements; with me your uncertainties are at an end; your market is now at hand, and it is a ſure one; go exert yourſelves to the utmoſt, and your moſt ſpirited improvements ſhall be rewarded; the extenſion of diſtillation will enſure a market for your increaſed productions, and no extraneous expence will diminiſh their price.

Attend likewiſe for a moment to the natural, the neceſſary effects of this ſtate of facts upon the general agriculture of the country: It cannot be otherwiſe but that the exertions of the farmer will become more ſpirited; the lands will be better and more generally cultivated; a vaſt increaſe will be found in the quantity of the grain produced. When corn is exported, it returns not again to enrich our fields; but our own, or imported grain, manufactured in our diſtilleries, will return ſuch a rich productive manure to the ſurrounding country, as cannot fail to increaſe and circulate a general plenty. But I have farther to add, that if they are ſuppreſſed or diſcouraged, the conſumption of barley will be diminiſhed at leaſt two thirds over the iſland, and nothing profitable will be ſubſtituted in its place. This is a matter of very general concern; for, if

this takes place, the husbandman will not have it in his power to give its former place to barley in the regular rotation of his crops, because he would find no market for its production. In many parts of the country where the soil is peculiarly adapted for its cultivation, the farmer will be utterly at a loss what to do with his farm, being forced against his judgment to change his plans, his activity will be relaxed, and, despairing of success, not himself alone, but the community would ultimately incur a very material loss. I must not here be told, that if he does not find the culture of barley profitable, he may easily find a substitute in other grain. It is one of the few disadvantages of a British climate, that we can introduce so few varieties of agricultural plants into our rotation of crops; for it is a certain experienced truth, that the less frequently any species of grain is raised on the same field, it takes with it more kindly, and produces more plentifully; and the more extensive the rotation is, the labour of the farm is performed at less expence, being more divided over the year, and less confined to one season: Besides this, the peculiar culture given to barley, and the season in which it is commonly sown, afford a happy opportunity of disengaging from the soil every species of weeds; but if it is excluded from the rotation, the farmer will be obliged to fallow his grounds where it is not now thought necessary, and even where that judicious practice is already pursued, it must be done more frequently, so that it is a moderate computation to suppose, that one fifteenth part

of the land, which in the preſent ſyſtem gives good returns of grain, will, by this change, be found under an unproductive fallow. Surely it needs no calculation to perceive the infinite loſs this muſt prove to the community: the unfortunate farmer will firſt indeed experience its preſſure, but let the cautious landlord remember, that this is a great *rent-paying* article, and beware how he encourages an idea, which, by diminiſhing its production, may, in the iſſue, render his *rental leſs, and more precarious*. We this very ſeaſon had occaſion to take notice what were the effects of the diſtilleries. Many thouſand quarters of laſt year's barley were found lying with the farmers and corn dealers, to them and to the community perfectly uſeleſs, till they were relieved by the diſtilleries, which rendered this periſhing commodity happily productive to all concerned. Indeed there is not a circumſtance which does not expreſsly ſay, *if you diſcourage the diſtilleries, you injure your country*.

Were it true that the conſumption of grain by the diſtilleries was ſuch as really to diminiſh the food of the labourer and the manufacturer, did they increaſe the expence of his maintenance, were thus an additional price laid upon every production and manufacture of the country, I would at once give up the argument: I have, however, not only to recal the attention of the reader to what I have ſaid already to eſtabliſh the fact directly in oppoſition to this idea, but I have now to ſtate farther, that the diſtilleries, as it were, enlarge the very ſurface of the kingdom,

by allowing more and better lands to be employed in corn husbandry, and they vastly increase the quantity and diminish the price of animal food in our markets.

Our knowledge both of natural and political objects has of late years been considerably enlarged, and has opened fields for the active exertions of mankind, far beyond the opportunities of former times: this knowledge has facilitated improvements in every art; has extended our commerce, and multiplied our artificers, our husbandmen, and our sailors. By this general exertion, our riches, and, in consequence, our luxuries have increased; and this is in nothing more fully manifested, than in the increased consumption of animal food. This is so much the case, that, from the highest to the lowest orders of men, a certain proportion of it is considered by them as indispensible to their comfort; and the inhabitants of Great Britain live more on animal food than any other nation. To attain this object, and answer this large and increasing demand, cattle, sheep, hogs, &c. must be produced, reared to a certain age, and then fed for the market. The lands in Britain fit for rearing cattle and sheep, are much more extensive than those adapted for fatting them, and therefore the richest lands must be invariably applied to that purpose; so that this single article of consumption takes up an enormous extent of our best arable fields, which, if not so occupied, would certainly be applied to the production of the richest crops of grain.

Let the attentive reader now tell me if that man

would not deſerve well of ſociety, who would here propoſe a proper ſubſtitute, and reſtore a conſiderable proportion of thoſe fields to the more frequent and regular production of corn. This is the very thing which is done by the diſtilleries; they relieve the hand of the breeder of cattle, and encourage him to an increaſed attention in his line; they take the cattle in thouſands from the wildeſt paſtures, and, within a very few months, produce them again full fed for the ſlaughter; and every ox thus fed, ſupplies for one year the place of an acre of the richeſt land, and allows it to be converted into a corn field, and by that means brings many thouſand quarters of grain to the public market; an increaſe of production far, very far beyond the quantity of grain conſumed by all the diſtilleries. I farther add, that if the diſtilleries were fully encouraged, they would import a conſiderable quantity of grain, and each ten quarters of ſuch imported grain, beſides furniſhing the ſpirits extracted from it to the diſtiller, by its production of food for animals, would fill up the place of an acre of the beſt paſture land, which would be the ſame as if the extent of our country were not only increaſed but highly cultivated, and extending its rich production of corn to the benefit of all.

It has been mentioned above, that thouſands of cattle are fed in the diſtilleries, and that thereby much valuable land may be applied to the production of grain; it muſt, therefore, be evident to the reader, that a large additional ſupply of animal food is thus prepared for the market, ſupplies the increaſed de-

mand, and effectually keeps in moderation the price of that neceſſary article; and it is even of conſequence to obſerve, that as the diſtilleries depend not upon the viciſſitudes of ſeaſons, the ſupply they give is commonly brought forward in times of greater ſcarcity, when other reſources fail, which circumſtance makes them much more beneficial to the public.

Before I conclude this part of the argument, I beg that this fact, not generally known or ſufficiently attended to, may be particularly remarked, that the produce of a good acre of barley, after the ſpirits have been extracted from it, by the grains and dreg furniſhed from it, with the addition of the ſtraw, will yield little ſhort of as many pounds of well fed beef fit for the butcher, as any ordinary acre of paſture within the kingdom: This of itſelf balances the account of profit and loſs with the community, and puts, as a boon, the extracted ſpirits into their hands; a valuable article indeed, being a great means of increaſing our commerce and revenue, and thereby advancing the proſperity of the realm. When, therefore, the many agricultural advantages above enumerated, are combined, they muſt give ſuch weight and decided importance to the manufacture in queſtion, that no narrow prejudices, no trivial circumſtances, can overbalance them even in imagination for a moment.

But though I contend, that the diſtilleries ought neither to be ſuppreſſed nor diſcouraged, for which, I think, very weighty reaſons have been adduced, I

readily allow, that, in times of ſcarcity, it is highly proper that diſtillation ſhould be ſuſpended, for it would then be impolitic and improvident to permit them to conſume the grain in the country: But this applies not to the preſent queſtion, but rather greatly ſtrengthens my concluſion. It is even obvious, that the diſtilleries are in different ways the occaſion of more grain being raiſed than balances their conſumption, which increaſed ſupply ſerves to prevent a general ſcarcity; but beſides this, the granaries of the diſtillers are generally well ſtored with grain, to anſwer the continual demands of the manufacture: upon any emergency then, this is at the command of government, and may be brought to market in the critical moment of public diſtreſs; a meaſure lately wiſely adopted by government, and found very advantageous to the community.

To conclude this argument: Let us behold the thouſands of animated and healthy huſbandmen who are yearly employed in raiſing the materials for this manufacture; view their happy children, emblems of plenty and peace; behold the many thouſands employed in the manufacture itſelf; behold the thouſands ſupported in plenty by the circulation of its productions; in them recognize multitudes of your ſpecies enjoying life and happineſs; recognize in them a ſteady and ſtrong defence prepared againſt the enemies of our king and country; ſee them in their numerous offſpring laying a foundation for the proſperity and glory of after times; and ſay what man would have the heart to wiſh to lay deſolate a pro-

ſpect ſo delightful, to wiſh to ſhake theſe pillars of our national ſecurity, or to ſee theſe hopes of after times blaſted before them: No; ſurely no ſuch Britiſh ſubject can be found. The manufacture which has contributed ſo much, and ſtill offers ſo liberally to public proſperity and private happineſs, muſt ever meet the general approbation and ſteady ſupport of every patriot.

COMMERCE.

When, as above, I ſtated the advantages which either have been, or may be, realized to the agricultural intereſts of this country, from the eſtabliſhment of the diſtilleries, I thought my argument in ſupport of them ſo ſtrong and convincing, that nothing of equal weight could be added, to give importance to the manufacture, and obtain for them the moſt general and decided ſupport: But now, that I begin to look at the queſtion in its connection with the commerce of this country, I feel the importance of the cauſe increaſe every moment; and it appears ſo conſequential in a commercial view, that I can hardly be perſuaded he is a good countryman who would wiſh to ſuppreſs or diſcourage the diſtilleries.

It is juſtly ſaid, that he deſerves well of his country who promotes the cultivation of its fields, and contributes to the increaſe of its productions for the uſe of man. He, alſo, ſurely deſerves well of his country, who extends the ideas, and opens new

ſources of commercial enterpriſe to our merchants; for that man who fits out a ſingle veſſel in proſecution of an untried branch of commerce, is more valuable to this country, than if, with all the ſplendour of warlike ſucceſs, he had added another province to theſe realms; for commerce is the riches, the glory, and ſtrength of Britain.

Now, amidſt all the other advantages which have ariſen from the diſtillation of ſpirits from grain, I ſee it proffering to the community ſuch an extent of commerce, hitherto untried by Britons, ſuch profits, ſuch ſecurities to our moſt important intereſts, that I hope it will ſoon become a highly-favoured ſtaple with the Britiſh merchant.

Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, are ſo intimately connected, and depend ſo much upon each other, that it is difficult to diſtinguiſh their objects, ſo as to fix them ſeparately upon the attention. I am afraid the attentive reader may have reaſon to think I ſometimes blend them careleſsly together. I know that agriculture furniſhes the materials; the arts prepare them for the uſe of man; and commerce ſends them over the globe, to miniſter to his pleaſures and his wants: and ſo wiſely has Nature adjuſted the balance of her favours over the face of the earth, that there is ſcarcely a country ſo deſtitute, but it offers ſome production peculiar to itſelf, which, either in its natural or manufactured ſtate, is fitted to promote the pleaſure or profit of ſome other people who are not poſſeſſed of it, which makes it to them an object of deſire. The manufacturer of China, works

for the huntſman of Lapland and Labrador; the fiſh and the train-oil of Greenland are carried in exchange for the wines of Andaluſia, and the gold of Peru. Now, the genius of a wiſe people is demonſtrated by their keeping a ſteady hold of each of their productions, until they have manufactured them to the higheſt perfection of which they are capable, before they permit them to be ſent abroad. By theſe means, they neceſſarily paſs through many hands; ſupport many families; are exported at leaſt expence; and, in the end, are offered to foreign markets to the beſt advantage. This principle pervades every mercantile arrangement in Britain. Wool is not permitted to be exported, till it is manufactured into cloth: Premiums are given in Scotland, to encourage the raiſing of flax; and great quantities of that raw material is imported, to encourage the manufacture of linens, with which we ſerve America and the colonies: The importation of French cambric and Dutch linen is prohibited, leaſt they ſhould affect our trade in theſe articles: The ſame idea has prohibited the enticing our manufacturers into foreign countries. On this principle, then, how unmercantile, how improvident, is that arrangement, which permits, yea, which encourages, by a premium, the exportation of grain from this country—an article capable of being manufactured, ſo as to preſerve and to ſecure great commercial advantages to the country. But what adds infinitely to the abſurdity, is, that this bountied corn is ſent abroad to our more induſtrious neighbours, that it may be manufactured into ſpirits, and

returned to us again for our home conſumption. This, ſurely, is a commercial arrangement, the very worſt that any people can adopt. Is it conſiſtent with common ſenſe? Is it conſiſtent with commercial principles? What enlightened merchant, but would be aſhamed to ſupport ſo ruinous a ſyſtem? for ruinous, indeed, muſt the balance of ſuch a trade be to any country: Yet in this predicament preciſely is Great Britain placed; and, from this diſgraceful predicament, do the diſtilleries offer to redeem her. Permit us only, ſay theſe induſtrious manufacturers, the freedom of our trade; and we will retain each buſhel of our corn in our country; and that, too, whilſt a ready market and ſtimulated induſtry add to the fertility of our fields: The manufacture of our ſpirits will ſupply the conſumption of the country at large; and the money of Britain ſhall not henceforth be ſent abroad, to furniſh what our own induſtry can ſo eaſily ſupply.

I ſtand with a kind of ſolemn reverence, and contemplate the deep-thinking, the induſtrious, the perſevering Hollander, labouring under every diſcouragement, calmly purſuing the road to proſperity, directed by the true principles of induſtry and commerce. I find him importing grain; for of that his own country furniſhes little or none: I find him importing coals; for of theſe he has none at all: with every diſadvantage from the nature of his ſituation, I behold him raiſing numerous diſtilleries; carrying on aſtoniſhing manufactures; and, from them, ſupplying with ſpirits every country in Europe, and

eſpecially filling the Britiſh market with this manufacture. Thus he makes every nation pay tribute to his genius, and contribute to the proſperity of his native country. I cannot refuſe my reſpect to ſo important a character. But, on the other hand, how do I feel myſelf aſhamed for my country, when I behold my indolent, my inattentive, my improvident countrymen exporting their corn, exporting their coals, exporting their very money, all to Holland, that they may receive, in return, ſpirits, which they themſelves may manufacture as perfectly as any people upon earth. How unlike is this to Britiſh genius or enterpriſe! I hold in contempt the idea, that the Dutch will always excel us in the manufacture of gin. Give due encouragement; and, even in that, if we muſt have gin, they ſhall not long excel us: Yea, relieve from oppreſſion, give due encouragement, and in no ſcience, in no art, can Britiſh genius, induſtry, or activity be excelled. Is it not, then, a particular diſgrace to our country, that any foreign nation ſhould be able to drive us even out of our own markets, and ſupply ſpirits for our home conſumption? The policy which leads to it is perfectly inexplicable.

Hitherto I have only attended to the ſpirit trade in Britain, as legally carried on againſt us, by the ſuperior induſtry of our neighbours; and conſidered them as having only the diſadvantages of their natural ſituation to overcome: But how much more ſhall we be ſurpriſed, to find our domeſtic arrangement ſo ſingularly deviſed, as to diſcourage our

own manufacture; as even to afford a price which is a ſufficient premium to our neighbours to ſend us their ſpirits, through all the hazards of the ſea, amidſt the danger of being taken by our cruizers, and being confiſcated, becauſe it is an illicit trade. Cannot even theſe views of things perſuade us, that their profits muſt be great, indeed, which can inſure againſt ſuch expenſive and dangerous adventures? Does not this plainly tell us, that ſuch encouragement ſhould be afforded to the diſtillers, as may be ſufficient to put an end to this pernicious traffic, deſtroy the ſmuggling on our coaſts, and ſave us the expence and diſhonour of importing foreign ſpirits for our home conſumption?

Previous to the licence diſtillery duty eſtabliſhed in Scotland, ſmuggling of both foreign and home-made ſpirits was carried on to an alarming height; inſomuch, that it became an object of ſpecial attention to government: and they recommended it ſtrongly to the legal diſtillers, to manufacture ſuch ſpirits, and to put the trade on ſuch a footing, as ſhould exclude both the foreign and domeſtic ſmuggler from our markets. The diſtillers thought themſelves, in conſequence of this intimation, entitled to ſupport, in their exertions towards accompliſhing the deſired object. They did exert themſelves; and the end in view was completely attained with the home, and nearly ſo with the foreign ſmuggler. But if we now diſcourage the diſtilleries, if we reduce them to their former ſtate, or put them in a worſe condition than they were before, it is obvious what muſt

be the conſequence of ſuch arrangements: Smugglers will again infeſt our coaſts, and will fill the country with foreign ſpirits; and, in every corner, will illicit ſtills furniſh ſpirits cheaper to the country than they ever can be afforded by a licenced diſtillery. Such is our vicinity to Holland, the run is ſo ſhort, ſuch is the nature of our coaſts, ſo interſected with bays and creeks, that ſmuggling is hardly hazardous; at leaſt, not ſo much ſo, as to intimidate the Dutchman from ſeeking ſo ready and ſo profitable a market for his ſpirits. Such is the ſituation of Scotland, ſo much are the common people acquainted with diſtillation, that they ſeem only to wait for the impolitic diſcouragement of the legal diſtilleries, to recommence their ancient trade, and furniſh ſpirits to the country, without putting them to the expence of any duties to government. No laws can reach them, for they will be too numerous to be puniſhed; and the oſtenſible ſmugglers will have no property in which they can ſuffer; the implements of their manufacture, though confiſcated, will be ſupplied within a week: The active exciſe officer will be in danger of his life, for the ſmugglers are lawleſs; it will be painful for the military to interfere, for the ſmugglers are poor, and will be befriended by the people at large; the juſtices of peace will lay but a gentle hand upon them, for they wiſh not to diſcourage the farmer, and loſe him the ſale of his barley, upon which their rents ſo much depend. In ſhort, they will be found, in the cities and in the fields, in the hills and in the muirs; they will be numerous; they

be more plentiful and cheap; the crown will be defrauded of its revenue; the fair trader will be discouraged and ruined; the diſtraction of the trade will deſtroy every agricultural or commercial advantage which ought to be derived from it; and it will produce every diſadvantage which the trade in its utmoſt ſtate of depravity can poſſibly engender to the country. The reader will recollect, that I ſaid in the beginning, that this northern climate will not be deprived of ſpirits. Suppreſs, then, or diſcourage the diſtilleries, and this muſt be the irremediable method in which the country will be ſupplied. Judge, then, how the argument ſtands with them who wiſh to ſuppreſs the diſtilleries.

What I have hitherto advanced reſpects alone our home conſumption, and the wiſdom and advantage of our ſupplying ourſelves with ſpirits, by means of a regular licenced manufacture, and that we do not permit foreigners nor ſmugglers to ſupply our markets with that article. But I go farther; I think it undeniable, that diſtillation ought to be eſtabliſhed for exportation; and we ought to ſupply every nation which will receive our ſpirits; and ſuch an eſtabliſhment ought to meet with a ſteady, a general, and ſpirited ſupport; for it is an article capable of greatly enlarging the commerce of our country with much advantage.

I am aſtoniſhed that our government has attended ſo ſuperficially to this branch of our commerce, with ſo fair an example immediately under their eye. The Dutch grow little corn, and yet their country is the

granary of Europe. They import all their fuel; they can have little advantage from their natural ſituation to aid machinery in carrying on their works; and yet, under all theſe diſcouragements, they manufacture more ſpirits in one week than all Britain does in ſeveral months. With theſe they carry on a great and flouriſhing trade to all the ſurrounding, eſpecially to the northern nations. What circumſtance is it, what fatal influence is it, which prevents us from taking from them the profits of this trade? Our advantages in corn, in coals, in machineery, are greatly ſuperior to theirs; our coaſts are more ſafe, our harbours of more convenient acceſs. Is it not then, in ſuch circumſtances, more wiſe to manufacture our corn than to export it? Is it not more ſpirited ſtill to import grain, to extend our diſtilleries, and fill up the foreign markets? Would not our ſpirits be a ſafe and eaſy barter for the immenſe quantity of timber and iron which we import from the Baltic? a trade whoſe balance has always hitherto been againſt us. Why may we not procure even the grain itſelf in barter for our ſpirits? I think in time, ſuch are our peculiar advantages, that we may ſupply even Holland itſelf with ſpirits, in return for the flax and flax ſeed, and all the various articles in which we trade with that country. Nothing, ſurely, could be more advantageous for us. The importation of that grain, and the extenſion of commerce by the extenſion of the diſtilleries, would increaſe our riches, increaſe our ſhipping, and the number of our ſailors, all ſailing in climates inſpiring health and

vigour. The animal food in our markets would be ſo much increaſed, that neither our merchantmen nor our naval armaments need any longer depend upon Ireland for ſupply of well fed beef and hogs. In ſhort, in every point of view, the trade is ſtrongly recommended to encouragement; and a proſperous diſtillery is found to be calculated to add greatly to the commercial intereſts of the country.

But, before I conclude this article, I muſt take the liberty to add, that our diſtilleries are fully ſufficient to ſupply to advantage with ſpirits all the demands of the Britiſh navy. Our navy is the bulwark and ſecurity of our country; and no perſon can think that the ſafety and comfort of our ſailors can be too ſtrictly attended to. They cannot be ſent to ſtruggle with the variety of climates, and combat with the ſtorms of the ocean, without ſuch proviſions of ſpirituous liquors as are neceſſary at all times to invigorate their exertions, and preſerve their health. Now, can any perſon ſay, when we have a full and ſafe ſupply at hand, that we ſhould go to France, to Holland, or to the Weſt Indies, to furniſh them? The conſumption of ſpirits, both in our mercantile and warlike fleets, is very great; the tax which it lays upon commerce is enormous; and it is found a weighty addition to the expence of our naval armaments. Our diſtilleries could ſupply the whole, at little more than half the expence; and the other half, being ſpent at home, would in fact be ſaved to the community.

Previous to the year 1744, the royal navy of Bri-

tain was ſupplied with ſpirits from France and Holland, and our commercial fleets almoſt wholly from Holland. About that period, it was thought that brandy and gin could only ſuit the taſte of the Britiſh ſailors. Indeed, long after that period, this taſte was ſo prevalent over all Scotland, except in the Highlands, that the uſe of home made ſpirits was ſcarcely known. But about the year 1744, our Weſt India colonies began to make government ſenſible of their importance: and their produce promiſed ſo fair to be productive of revenue, that they were eſteemed deſerving of every encouragement; and, for that reaſon, the uſe of rum was firſt introduced into the navy, and ſoon after it was introduced into general uſe over the country, and became a faſhionable drink. But rum is a ſpirit naturally harſh and diſagreeable, eſpecially when new; and, being filled with its coarſe eſſential oil, it is heavy upon the ſtomach, and of difficult digeſtion. Upon its firſt introduction, therefore, into the fleet, it was very much diſliked; and its ſubſtitution for brandy and gin was reckoned a grievance, and was the ſubject of much complaint. Uſe has now familiarized it to the taſte of the ſailors: and to ſubſtitute malt ſpirits in its place, might for a little while be deemed unpleaſant; but well made malt ſpirits afford a lighter, purer, and more healthy beverage, being an extraction from the fineſt parts of grain; and, when moderately uſed, are poſſeſſed of many qualities which give them a decided preference above rum; ſo that there can be no good reaſon aſſigned why they ought not to be ſubſtituted

in its place. The taſte of this country has lately undergone almoſt a total change; and, comparatively ſpeaking, little gin or rum is now made uſe of. The ſame change would undoubtedly take place amongſt our ſailors: and our diſtilleries are fully able to ſupply them at much ſmaller expence: and no man ſurely will pretend to ſay that the Weſt India trade ought to meet with more indulgence than the domeſtic trade of Britain. Yea, cramp not the genius of the Britiſh diſtiller, and he will prepare his ſpirits ſuited to the taſte of all: and a proſperous diſtillery will be found to increaſe our commerce around us in every direction, and add greatly to the proſperity of the Britiſh empire.

The cotton manufacture was ſome time ago thought prejudicial to this country, as rivalling our linen manufacture, the ſupporting of which was long the darling object of Scots attention; but now the cottons are amongſt the firſt and moſt valuable articles both of the manufacture and commerce of this country. It is ſo long ago as 1727, that Mr. Ker of Kerſland, a judicious writer, when ſpeaking of our natural advantages for trade and commerce, obſerved, that the manufacture of cotton and malt ſpirits offered liberally to the proſperity of Scotland; and predicted that they would ſoon engage our general attention and regard. The firſt part of his prediction has been amply fulfilled; and I doubt not but the laſt will be equally verified, as it equally deſerves the approbation and encouragement of every lover of his country.

REVENUE.

HAVING conſidered the diſtillation of ſpirits from grain in its connection with the commerce of this country, I now proceed to ſhow, that it deſerves the moſt liberal encouragement, from the ample and permanent fund of revenue it affords to government.

After what has been above ſtated reſpecting the benefits of this manufacture to the country at large, I am perſuaded I will not again be told that it ought to be tolerated, from the ſingle idea that it is highly productive in revenue; but, if there was not another, I am ſatisfied this one is of itſelf fully ſufficient.

Contemptible, indeed, are thoſe political maxims which ſpeak of the intereſts of government as a matter diſtinct from the intereſts of the people; as if a father, in rearing up his family, would blaſt their happineſs, in order to eſtabliſh his power over them. In our government ſuch an idea is inadmiſſible. Our gracious ſovereign entertains no views incompatible with the proſperity of his ſubjects. He knows the ſtrength and glory of the throne is eſtabliſhed in the well regulated happineſs of his people. And though nothing is more obviouſly neceſſary for the ſupport of the conſtitution and laws of any country than the contribution of the community for that purpoſe, yet it muſt be admitted, that it is the moſt painful office of government to demand that contribution, and impoſe taxes upon the people: We, therefore, cheerfully admit the neceſſity of taxation; notwithſtanding it muſt be allowed, that that mode of taxation is

wiſeſt which is moſt general, and leaſt oppreſſive to any individual, which does not cramp the exertions of induſtry in any line, or prevent the united efforts of all in behalf of the general proſperity. I am indeed perſuaded that any mode of taxation is but ill deviſed, which does not, like water, in a little while find its level, and attach, proportionally, every individual in the community. When, therefore, taxes are ſo deviſed as to permit free ſcope to the energies of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, they are wiſely deviſed; and all complaints againſt them are captious and ill founded. We may, indeed, lament that it is neceſſary to tax the country ſo deeply. We may fear for the future, and be alarmed, leſt increaſing taxation may ſome time or other exclude our manufactures from the foreign market; but ſtill, if the preſent moment be a moment of neceſſity, and the public intereſt requires taxes to be impoſed, neceſſity teaches the duty of the ſubject, and they ought cheerfully to be ſubmitted to, when they are impartially laid on. I account myſelf fortunate, in diſcuſſing this part of my ſubject, that I have no occaſion nor inclination to complain of the manufacture of ſpirits by diſtillation being made an object of reaſonable taxation; for I acknowledge that it is fair and equitable that it ſhould be taxed; and it is one of the powerful reaſons by which I ſupport the importance of the diſtilleries, that they are ſo eſſentially neceſſary to government, on account of the revenue they afford; a revenue important indeed, when it is viewed in its various branches, as affecting the maltman,

the diſtiller, the rectifier, and the retailer; a revenue which incurs no public odium, and occaſions no general complaint; a revenue which is highly productive at preſent, and will continue ſo, and even increaſe with the extenſion of the trade, if it is properly encouraged.

Some, I know, would wiſh to ſee it taxed even to its extinction, being ignorant of its importance to the community at large; but this inconſiderate ſentiment can have no influence on our well-informed government. The enlightened legiſlature of Great Britain too fully underſtand the intereſts of the country, to be miſled in this matter; they are not now to be taught what are the wiſeſt principles of taxation, or how moſt properly to apply them to the manufacture in queſtion. They have ſeen it productive of great commercial and agricultural advantages, and they will treat it accordingly; and whilſt they are pleaſed, alongſt with theſe advantages, to find it ſo productive of revenue, they will never tax it beyond its powers; they will enlarge, and not confine its circle; they will avoid laying upon it ſuch a burden as will diſcourage the manufacturer; they will avoid ſuch an extent of taxation as will prevent the home comſumption or exportation of the article; they will avoid ſuch oppreſſive taxes as will give foreign ſpirits a preference in the market; they will carefully ſupport the fair trader, while they diſcourage both the foreign and domeſtic ſmuggler; in ſhort, their impoſitions will not be directed by caprice, nor laid on by the oppreſſive hand of prejudice: the ſucceſs of the ma-

nufacture, the intereſts of the country at large, and the ſtability of the revenue, will inſpire every ſentiment, and direct every clauſe in every law which ſhall be formed concerning this important manufacture.

Upon what principles government have thought proper to draw lines of diviſion throughout the kingdom, and why they have diſtinguiſhed one part of theſe realms from another, either by the quantum of duty laid on, or the manner of exacting it, I do not underſtand; but I well know, that a wiſe government is always impartial; they know no favourites; the proſperity of the trade, and extent and ſecurity of the revenue, are their only objects; and it is the ſame thing to them, whether theſe objects are ſecured by manufacturers living in London, or in the Highlands of Scotland.

The idea of equalizing the different corners of a country, appears alſo to me extremely objectionable. If nature has given peculiar advantages to one corner of a country, in preference to another, inſtead of reducing that to the level of the leſs favoured ſituation, it is in that very corner that the manufacture ought to be encouraged, as it there promiſes to be moſt productive to all concerned, and in conſequence to the revenue itſelf. Suppoſe, for example, an attempt was made to equalize to the merchant the expence and conveniency of the trade from London to Leith and Glaſgow, in what eſtimation would we hold the wiſdom of ſuch arangement; nothing could be eſteemed more abſurd.

It appears to me equally impolitic in government, to try to hold a balance in their hands, and, by circumſcribing the boundaries, or by any other method, to prevent rivalſhip amongſt manufacturers themſelves. Rivalſhip is always profitable to the community, for it engages the attention of the manufacturer to every circumſtance by which he may attain perfection in his line, and be enabled to offer his goods better in quality, and cheaper, to the public. A feeling of rivalſhip expands the faculties of the ſoul, and produces great and animated exertions. If you ſhut up the mind, even of the moſt retired philoſopher, from its invigorating influence, you would damp the ardour of his purſuits, and deprive ſociety of his moſt valuable diſcoveries. A Britiſh miniſtry, or Britiſh ſenate, indulging no partialities, cannot long be influenced by circumſcribed ideas; and I will venture to predict, that after every experiment has been tried upon the diſtilleries, it will be found wiſe to aboliſh diſtinctions entirely, and have one law for the whole kingdom.

I am not in poſſeſſion of facts ſufficient to enable me to decide whether the Engliſh or Scotch diſtillers are under the moſt profitable ſyſtem; but I am decidedly of opinion, that if the proſperity of this valuable manufacture, or its productiveneſs to the revenue, are the only objects in view, one ſyſtem will be adopted, and not a ſingle clauſe be found in the diſtillery laws which will diſtinguiſh an Engliſhman from a Scotchman, or the Lowlands from the Highlands of Scotland. I have not an opportunity of be-

ing informed whether our adminiſtration are fully ſatisfied with the duties paid by the Engliſh diſtillers, but report ſpeaks loudly of their intentions of greatly increaſing the duties upon the Scotch manufacturer. I hope this is miſinformation. For, with the Scotch diſtillers, upon the preſent ſyſtem, the experiment of our financers has been gradual. Government began with 30s. from that they advanced to 3l. then to 9l. and now they have commenced the trial of 18l. upon the gallon of the contents of their ſtills. The additional duties have thus been gradually advanced upon them; but the experiment cannot as yet ſupport the idea, that they are able to bear a greater load of duties. There is a certain point to which this may be carried, and no farther. We vigorouſly reach forward to the object which is attainable; but if it is put beyond our reach, our exertions are at an end. Government have but commenced the experiment of the tax of 18l .upon the gallon of the contents of their ſtills, and they ought ſurely to beware of being deceived by accidental and occaſional circumſtances, ſo as to be led to think that the manufacture can be carried on either to the advantage of the public, the profit of the diſtiller, or ſecurity of the revenue, by advancing the duties upon ſpeculative expectations. There is not a doubt, that if the diſtiller is diſcouraged, the ſmuggler will ſupply his place in the trade, and fill up the demands of the country; for, if ſpirits cannot be offered to the market by the licenced manufacturer at a price within the abilities of the conſumer, the trade to the legal

diſtiller will be annihilated, the public treaſury diſappointed, foreign ſpirits will be poured into the country; the Dutch will provide us in abundance, at a price within the reach of our ploughmen and mechanics; for this country will be ſupplied. Our preſent miniſtry are well acquainted with all thoſe circumſtances; and ſuch able financers will carefully balance the whole concern, and lay ſuch duties only as can be ſupported by a proſperous diſtillery, as will encourage the manufacturer, ſecure the revenue, exclude the conſumption of foreign ſpirits, and baffle the efforts of the lawleſs ſmuggler.

Upon the whole, it muſt be obvious to every man of reflection, that the object of my argument is fully attained, viz. That the revenue which is at preſent, and may hereafter be derived from the diſtilleries, is a momentous object to the country; and that the manufacture merits not the depreſſing, but the encouraging hand of government; for, upon that being given to it, it enſures to the crown a revenue, large, efficient, and permanent.

I flatter myſelf, that I have now eſtabliſhed, to the conviction of the candid reader, the propoſition which was at firſt laid down, "That the diſtillation of ſpirits from grain is beneficial to the agriculture, the commerce, and revenue of this country; that, therefore, this manufacture merits univerſal countenance and encouragement." But no ſooner is this concluſion formed, than I find it oppoſed by ſome men of genuine humanity, who, though they are convinced of the juſtneſs of the preceding ſtatements, lament,

that any buſineſs ſhould be eſtabliſhed, whoſe profits are derived from the miſeries of mankind, or that the public revenue ſhould have a dependence upon any manufacture, whoſe proſperity tends to root up the very foundations of government itſelf, and bring to ruin the moſt invaluable intereſts of the human race: for ſuch, ſay they, is the manufacture in queſtion, which prepares a ſubtile poiſon,—which infects the human conſtitution with diſeaſe and death; a poiſon more deadly ſtill,—which perverts each moral principle in the mind, excites tumults, ſedition, treaſon, and deſtruction in ſociety, and, corrupting the ſoul, engenders every vice and depravity, which muſt bring at laſt the tainted wretch to ruin.

Were I perſuaded that the picture thus ſtrongly coloured, and preſented to the view, were real,—or did I think that it had a foundation anywhere but in a heated and jaundiced imagination,—any other perſon might take up the cauſe of the diſtilleries: My pen ſhould never be proſtituted to ſo baſe a purpoſe.

Curſed are the talents which are employed againſt humanity; yea, doubly curſed is that man, who, for any intereſt, could betray the cauſe of virtue, and ſharpen a weapon to wound, to deſtroy the happineſs of his fellow-men. But, having a perſuaſion ſo oppoſite to theirs, I will not ſhrink from the taſk I have impoſed upon myſelf, and hope to ſatisfy the candid reader, that the eſtabliſhment of the diſtilleries is not prejudicial to the health of any order of men, that they occaſion no diſturbance to the peace

and government of the country, and that the morals of the lower orders of the community are little, if any thing, corrupted by them.

HEALTH.

WITHOUT health, men can ſcarce be happy; without tranquillity, health itſelf cannot be enjoyed; and without virtue, tranquillity can be but of ſhort duration: for peace, and health, and every earthly good, by a man devoid of virtue, would be poſſeſſed in vain.

The ſpirits diſtilled in this country, labour under the heavy imputation of being deſtructive to the lower ranks of ſociety. I am warmly intereſted in this order of mankind: and whilſt they, labouring daily for the comfortable ſubſiſtence of themſelves and families, ſtand the baſis of national proſperity and ſtrength, for *their* intereſts the ſovereign ſhould wield the ſceptre of his power, the ſtateſman ſhould form his deep-laid ſchemes of political improvement; for them philanthropy ſhould expand the ſoul of the contemplative philoſopher, and direct his reſearches; and the mighty man, and the man of wealth, ſhould be liberal in the application of their efforts and their riches, for *their* happineſs. But, ardent as I find myſelf in the love of my ſpecies, and anxious for their good, I cannot perſuade myſelf to dread dangers where I cannot perceive them; and I do not diſcover thoſe evil tendencies, thoſe deleterious qualities,

attributed to the ſpirituous liquors commonly made uſe of amongſt us. I have, indeed, found the intemperate uſe of them attended with very pernicious effects: I have ſeen it occaſion a temporary delirium and madneſs, and have obſerved it enervate the conſtitution, and bring on debility and death. But I entreat the candid reader to obſerve, that I here ſpeak of intemperance, not of uſe; and, in that reſpect, what ſingle enjoyment is there, to which mankind have acceſs, but labours under the ſame inconveniency, and may not be equally abuſed? To eat to exceſs is gluttony, and engenders diſeaſe; to cover up the body too warmly ſubjects it to weakneſs, and may induce a train of evils. There is found imperfection in man himſelf; and every means of his ſubſiſtence in life is marked alſo with imperfection, in order that every circumſtance may call forth the exertions of his rational powers, to guide his conduct, and to aſſiſt him to avoid miſtakes. I ſhall then be to theſe my fellow-men—thoughtleſs and improvident as they are—I ſhall be to them the voice of reaſon: I ſhall tell them, not to eat intemperately, to their hurt; but I ſhall not forbid them altogether the uſe of food; I know it is neceſſary for their health and preſervation; I ſhall forbid them to be intoxicated; but I ſhall not deny them any enjoyment which they have earned hardly by their labours: I ſee their health concerned in their temperance, but not in their abſtinence: I ſhall adviſe them to be conſtantly moderate; but ſhall not lay them under a phyſical neceſſity, or oblige them, by

irreſiſtible authority, not to uſe ſtrong liquors: The mind of the meaneſt revolts at ſuch compulſion; and every attempt to compel them would be vain.

Yet, after all, the whole objection proceeds upon this looſe idea, that man is ſo depraved, that, if he has it in his power, he will get drunk: Though, ſtill, there is no proportion of mankind, notwithſtanding their opportunities, who fall into unhealthful intemperance; and, even reckoning their reſpective numbers, the common people are not more intemperate than their ſuperiors. But, if it is true, that this propenſity is ſo ſtrong, that man cannot poſſibly reſiſt temptation; and, if it is thought neceſſary effectually by law to guard the health and morals of the country, as every member of the community is equally dear to the legiſlature,—one law ought to embrace the intereſts of all. Spirits, therefore, of all kinds, all ſorts of wines, ale, porter, every ſpecies of fermented intoxicating liquors, muſt equally be prohibited, or put beyond the reach of every rank of men; for moſt men have their favourite liquors, and martyrs are ſeen periſhing daily by the love of each. I am perfectly aſſured, that more men become valetudinary, and die, by the powerful effects of claret, port, brandy, and rum, in proportion to the numbers of thoſe who uſe them, than become ſickly, and periſh, by the abuſe of Britiſh ſpirits: and beſides, ſince, in the higher ranks of life, it is by the exertions of their underſtandings, chiefly, men are beneficial to ſociety,—and ſince the intemperate uſe of ſtrong liquors much more quickly and fatally

enervates the faculties of the mind, than thoſe of the body; it is ſurely much more requiſite to guard the health of ſuch invaluable citizens, than of thoſe whoſe greateſt benefit to ſociety depends upon the leſs important exertions of their bodily powers. If, then, a law is to provide for this, and enforce an abſtinence from generous liquors, the whole commerce of wines, of rum, of brandy, and of gin,—the whole manufactures of home-made ſpirits, cyder, ale, and porter, muſt periſh together. But if, inſtead of this, there is a neceſſity for ſome cordial beverage, ſome ſtrong liquor for occaſional uſe,—and that one is to be preferred, which is leaſt hurtful to the health, leaſt productive of diſeaſe,—I do not heſitate to decide, at once, and will ſhow clearly, that the preference muſt be given to that pure ſpirit which is diſtilled from wholeſome uncontaminated grain, ſuch as is manufactured in our diſtilleries.

The intelligent reader needs hardly be told, that, at firſt, drink became an object of deſire to men, merely as it ſerved to aſſuage their thirſt; and Nature, with this effect, has wiſely connected the quality in liquids, of diſſolving food, and preparing it in the ſtomach, for entering the various veſſels fitted for its reception. Among the divers productions of the earth, they would ſoon find that the ſucculent, ſubacid, or, as we ſpeak, cooling fruits, had the effect of quenching thirſt, and of ſupplying, in ſome meaſure, the place of water. Accident, perhaps, led them to diſcover, that water mixed with fruits of various kinds, with vegetable juices, or herbs of a grateful

flavour, was rendered more palatable; and experience would ſoon teach them, that, thus mixed, it was more beneficial. They would become deſirous to preſerve a mixture or preparation ſo agreeable, and would naturally be inſtigated to collect the juices moſt pleaſant and nutritious; and, it is well known, that theſe, when brought together in any quantity, ſoon begin to change, and gradually go into what is called the vinous fermentation. Though, probably, men did not diſtinguiſh therein the ſaccharine matter from the mucilage, or the other conſtituent parts from one another, they could not fail to approve the beverage itſelf, when thus almoſt ſpontaneouſly preſented to them by the hand of Nature. A very ſhort experience would perſuade them, that this proceſs was ſo far from being prejudicial, that it rendered their drink at once more palatable and more refreſhing. In proportion as any tree or plant produced to them fruits or juices endued with theſe properties, they would become objects of attentive regard and culture; and thus would their vineyards be planted, and their vines would abound.

The three great purpoſes for which liquors are uſed by men are, for quenching thirſt, for nouriſhment, and as ſtimulating cordials; and the conſtituent parts of all of them, fitted for theſe purpoſes, are, water, mucilage, ſugar, vegetable acid, ſpirit, eſſential oil, and ſometimes a bitter. A compoſition of two or more of theſe, with ſlight variation, conſtitutes all the varieties of drink which are made uſe of by mankind.

At what particular time the farinaceous parts of grain were ſubmitted to a ſimilar proceſs, and converted by fermentation into drink for man, cannot now, I believe, be eaſily aſcertained; but beer, or ſuch liquors, produced from grain, fermented, were known to the Egyptians at a very early period, as well as to the Gauls, whom the Romans found uſing them. It was rather later, indeed, before man acquired the knowledge of extracting ſpirits from any material by a proceſs of diſtillation. The Egyptians and ancient Greeks, ſome have thought, were entirely ignorant of it: But whoever made this important diſcovery, it was a diſcovery highly valuable to ſociety; for ſpirits conſiſt of the moſt generous cordial ingredient contained in any kind of drink yet known to man; and, when diluted with water, are free from the pernicious qualities of moſt other beverages. The advantages of drink thus prepared are evident: It is light on the ſtomach, not being clogged with acid, nor with mucilage, or ſugar, which are apt to become ſour, and to occaſion the moſt painful diſorders in the bowels: It takes up little room in ſtoring; is eaſily and may be long preſerved, always meliorating with time. By ſtimulating the ſtomach, and promoting digeſtion, it is indirectly nutritious, more than is generally believed, as well as highly cordial; and its powers and effects may be perfectly regulated by diluting it with water. Thus it may be ſuited to every taſte, to every ſtomach, to every conſtitution; and nothing but exceſs can make it prejudicial. Of all the different kinds of ſpirits, thoſe extracted from

grain are leaſt pernicious, being taken from the moſt perfect materials, and not loaded with any of thoſe eſſential oils, which in others are offenſive and ſickening, as in rum, &c. But there is not any doubt, that, however innoxious, and even advantageous, theſe ſpirits are, they are liable to be abuſed, and ſo is every cordial liquor which poſſeſſes the quality of exhilarating the animal ſpirits, and producing intoxication. All ſuch other liquors have been, and are abuſed, even more than malt ſpirits, and ever have been attended with worſe effects to the lower claſſes of men; and, wherever money is in their poſſeſſion, a heedleſs, improvident, and convivial people, will not, even by compulſion, be reſtrained from their enjoyment.

It is well known, that, in the potteries in France, the labourers indulge to great extravagance in their ſmall wines. The like effects are produced by cyder, in the weſt of England, at the different manufactories and works in Devonſhire, Herefordſhire, Glouceſterſhire, and Shropſhire. It is well known what immenſe quantities of ſtrong ale and porter are drunk throughout England, and to what exceſs this is carried by the coal-heavers, porters, and draymen, and even by many who challenge to themſelves the reſpectable name of citizens, over all the country. It is, indeed, an unhappy circumſtance that cordial liquors ſhould be ſo often abuſed; but, if this is to happen, and I am afraid it can by no means be prevented, I do not heſitate to pronounce, that, of all others, malt ſpirits are decidedly the ſaf-

eſt. It is certain the exceſſive uſe of ſpirits induces a debility of conſtitution, and, beſides, occaſions a ſlight diſorder of the ſtomach and bowels; and every perſon who has a juſt regard to his health, comfort, or even life, will refrain from indulging to exceſs, eſpecially in a too frequent repetition of it. But it is a fact well known to medical men, that every ſpecies of ſtrong drink produces ſimilar effects, when uſed too freely. All kinds of cordial liquors waſte, and gradually debilitate the human frame. But far beyond, and much more ſtriking, are the pernicious effects of moſt fermented liquors. Theſe, being ſurcharged with much mucilage and ſugar, produce in the ſtomach an indigeſtible acid, which becomes the ſource and occaſion of many horrible diſorders, which often fill up the dragging hours of life with languor, pain, and miſery.

The gravel, the dropſy, and the gout, are the moſt certain effects of long-continued indulgence in fermented liquors; and, if this is confeſſed, another calamity needs not be added to the train of ills produced by the unhappy habit. In evidence of this aſſertion, gentlemen of the medical profeſſion are ſatisfied that the gravel was much more prevalent in this country ſome time ago, when malt ſpirits were not come into general uſe, and when ale was the principal drink amongſt the people. It is a well known fact, that the gravel and ſtone both abound exceedingly in France, where the people drink great quantities of their ſmall wines. In the cyder counties in England, theſe, and more excruciating com-

plaints, the Devonſhire colics, are found to be the frequent unhappy companions of the intemperate. He is ignorant, indeed, who does not know that the conſtant and immoderate uſe of ſtrong ale, beer, and porter, is dreadfully productive of ſimilar complaints to thoſe from wine: And it is not incurious to remark, that our great beer and porter ſwillers, without its being preſcribed to them, find it uſeful, and even neceſſary, to take a dram, or glaſs of ſpirits, frequently during the courſe of their long ſederunts, by whoſe diuretic qualities they work off, as they expreſs it, the effects of their large potations; and though in the end they find themſelves more inebriated, they invariably find their health more ſafe.

Theſe pernicious effects of fermented liquors are certain, and confeſſed by every one who has had occaſion to conſider them, as well as by medical men; and they are too fully verified in the obſervation of every one who attends our public hoſpitals. But above all the diſtinguiſhing and unequivocal effects which mark the danger of fermented liquors to the human frame, the gout is the moſt common, certain, and dreadful. The immoderate uſe of all kinds of wine is known to incorporate this diſtemper into the very conſtitution, which entails miſery for generations upon the human race; and the conſtant ingurgitation of porter and ſtrong ale often produces the ſame effects: But I believe there can ſcarcely be produced one inſtance, wherein a man, who made uſe of malt ſpirits diluted, for his conſtant, ordinary, or convivial drink, to whatever exceſs almoſt he in-

dulged himſelf, was afflicted with a ſettled gout, or even any goutiſh complaints at all, excepting ſuch were hereditary in his family. From this decided circumſtance, it may bear a queſtion, if our doughty wine-bibers, ſhould they drink leſs wine, and add a little malt ſpirits now and then, would not find effects ſimilar to what is experienced by our drinkers of ale; they might, indeed, be drunk ſooner, but would poſſibly be ſafer: And I think it happy for their health, that it is become faſhionable to ſubſtitute a tumbler of tody after ſupper, inſtead of wine. Might they not thereby be redeemed from the terrors which mix with their conviviality, the terrors of blue flannel, crutches, and premature old age?

I have been frequently amuſed with hearing ſome perſons ſtrongly recommend porter and ale as a drink peculiarly fit for the labouring people, in preference to ſpirits, on account of ſome ſuppoſed nutritive quality, of which, they ſay, theſe liquors are poſſeſſed. It is in this manner opinions are often formed, upon mere conjecture. I am ſure there is no medical perſon, accuſtomed to analiſe the qualities of liquors, or other ſubjects, but will tell you, that the only valuable part in ale and porter is the portion of ſpirit it contains; for the bitter, and the trifling quantity of ſugar and mucilage, contribute nothing to that purpoſe. By the abundance of acid and mucilage, indeed, the ſtomach is cloyed, and the deſire of food is thereby for a while extinguiſhed; but this is ſo far from being advantageous, that it is truly pernicious; for no cordial drink, not to ſay ardent ſpirits, to peo-

ple in health, ſhould be ſubſtituted for food: and it is an aſſured ſymptom of its becoming prejudicial to the conſtitution, when, by continued exceſs, it diminiſhes or deſtroys the appetite for ſolid food. I have farther to remark, that the preference given to porter above ſtrong ale, or the ſweet fermented liquors, by many perſons, is not founded in any real excellence in the liquor itſelf, but becauſe the mixture of a greater quantity of the bitter infuſion of hops makes it ſit lighter, and preſerves the ſtomach from the feeling of oppreſſion; though the truth is, the hop is of no farther advantage, or conducive to nutriment, than in proportion to the ſtimulus it communicates. There is, indeed, a general impreſſion in favour of bitters as a medicine which ſtrengthens the ſtomach, and in that reſpect they are frequently for a time uſeful; but a continued uſe of them is often prejudicial, and ſometimes fatal. This is proved to conviction, by the uſe of the well known Portland powder. This medicine conſiſts entirely in a collection of bitters; and was for a while conſidered as a valuable medicine for goutiſh complaints; and, when it was taken for a long time in ſteady continuation, it did perhaps ſeem to remove the gout, but it landed the patients in debility and death. All bitters would have the ſame effects, if taken long, and in conſiderable quantities. The only reaſon why the hop is not thus pernicious, is on account of its being conveyed by porter in but ſmall quantities into the ſtomach, or from its being corrected by the ſpirit the porter likewiſe contains; but by no means can the continual uſe of this bitter in porter

be medicinal or healthful. If it is then true that porter, ale, and beer, are chiefly beneficial, in as far as they contain a portion of ſpirit, the ſeparated ſpirits themſelves muſt be equally in proportion uſeful, with this particular quality, that they do not clog the ſtomach, and indiſpoſe it for receiving or digeſting the ordinary food. Clog the ſpirits with a ſufficient quantity of mucilage, jelly, or any glutinous inviſcating material, and the ſame effects will be preciſely felt as are felt from ale. It is common in the Highlands of Scotland to prepare for an early journey, by taking a glaſs of whiſky, mixed with a ſmall quantity of cream, only as much as removes the ardency, and moderates, but prolongs, the effect of the ſpirit; and upon this a man travels longer, without faintneſs or feeling of hunger, than if he had previouſly taken a plentiful meal, or drunk a quantity of ſtrong ale or porter, or any thing elſe. This drink, being mild and pleaſant, goes under the name of Old Men's Milk. In corroboration of the ſame principle, it may be remarked, that every perſon who keeps a dram ſhop, whether man or woman, invariably grows fat, and thoſe who indulge in dram drinking do the ſame, until their uſe of the ſpirits becomes exceſſive, by which intemperance the very principles of life may be deſtroyed.

Were not the ſubject too ſerious to be treated with levity, I would think it not improper to remark the dull ſtupidity which attends the ſwillers of porter and ſtrong ale. With them drunkenneſs participates ſomething of the diſguſting nature of downright gluttony. A progreſſive ſtupidity attends it. The long and tedious

proceſs of their intoxication is without mirth, without wit, becoming every moment more intolerable; and, as it is inſipid and diſguſting in its progreſs, and completion, ſo does it require a conſiderable time to reſtore the mind to rational exertion, or the body to its ordinary and neceſſary functions: So that theſe liquors have nothing to recommend them but the predilection of taſte, acquired by long inveterate habits: Whereas, if a man has loſt his decent and regulated regard for ſobriety, and *will* indulge in ſuch exceſſes, he will find the beverage of diluted malt ſpirits an exhilarating and mirth-inſpiring drink: If he *muſt* get drunk, his object is ſoon attained, and he becomes quickly an egregious fool; but he yet more quickly returns to his ſenſes: He immediately can renew his labours, and his time and induſtry are not long loſt to ſociety or his family. Aſſuredly intemperance is moſt baneful to the health, the intereſt, and the happineſs of mankind; but it is equally verified that malt ſpirits are frequently uſeful, ſometimes neceſſary, and, excepting in caſes of great and obvious abuſe, always ſafe.

To conclude, therefore, my argument, I appeal to the obſervation of the whole kingdom, if the common people of Scotland, who are moſtly accuſtomed to drink malt ſpirits, are not as healthy, and as long lived, and even more ſo, than the ſame claſs in England, who indulge in ale, porter, cyder, and other fermented liquors. I appeal to our hoſpitals, whether they are not more free from ſuch diſeaſes as are occaſioned by intemperance than thoſe of London. I appeal to our hardy, healthy, long-lived race of Highlanders,

who for the moſt part know, and value no other liquor than their native whiſky; and let their univerſal ſuffrage ſay, whether good malt ſpirits are not, for health, for ſafety, and for comfort, juſtly deſerving of a preference to beer, to ale, to porter, or to any other fermented liquor: and ſhould, in a northern climate, a cordial and ſtimulating beverage ſtill be ſought for, and if ſuch muſt be provided, where can any be found for that purpoſe, with ſo few defects, and many good properties, as the ſpirits which are furniſhed us from our diſtilleries?

TRANQUILLITY.

I NOW proceed to conſider the effects of the diſtilleries upon the internal tranquillity of the country. Many men, without taking time, or having abilities for accurate inveſtigation, are often diſpoſed to aſſign cauſes for events, or effects, which, in reality have not the moſt diſtant relation to them. This is the ſource of many errors both in judgment and conduct, and is indeed very injurious when it affects the public opinion upon important occaſions, or leads to meaſures hurtful to the public intereſt. Preciſely in this predicament, I apprehend, have the diſtilleries been placed before the public eye. Intereſted men, who wiſh to circumſcribe, if not to annihilate, that trade, wiſh to connect a train of events together, which have no relation to each other, and from thence they draw concluſions perfectly unfounded, and contrary to truth.

"Whilſt," ſay they, "the diſtillers were affording a full ſupply of ſpirits to the country, many men were daily ſeen intoxicated with drink, ſtaggering in our ſtreets. In that period of diſſipation commenced theſe aſſociations which were formed in various parts of the country, which, under the influence of ſeditious principles, held forth to the community the neceſſity of an entire reformation in every department of the government, and held forth themſelves as the perſons who alone were able to accompliſh the arduous taſk; but no ſooner were thoſe diſtilleries ſuſpended from working, and ſpirits become dearer in the country, than riot and diſſipation ceaſed; general depravity became leſs prevalent; the ſeditious aſſociations were diſſolved, and public tranquillity was univerſally reſtored. Who, then, knowing theſe certain facts, can deny the concluſion, that, if the diſtilleries were totally ſuppreſſed, diſſipation would be at an end, and peace internal reſtored and ſecured to the country?"

The reader is far from being intelligent, if he need any perſon to point out to him the ſophiſtry of the ſuppoſed connections in theſe objects, or the falſehood of the concluſion drawn from theſe ſuppoſitions; for the public tranquillity never was, and never can be affected, either by the wiſdom, or the guile, or the efforts, or the confuſion of the drunkard.

I ſhould be extremely ſorry, if the queſtion, in the diſcuſſion of which I am now engaged, were to become political; for, in fact, it is happily relieved from all connection with thoſe political opinions which divided the country; and it is only the intereſted ma-

nagement of thoſe who would wiſh to bring the diſtilleries under the public odium, which ever ſuggeſted the wild idea that they were inſtrumental in diſturbing the tranquillity of the country; but I entertain no doubt but I will fully ſatisfy every candid mind of the untruth, even the impoſſibility of this. Sedition and treaſon I hold to be crimes of deep enormity, and doubly guilty are they in this country who commit them, where we have ſuch ſubſtantial reaſons to love our ſovereign, and revere the conſtitution; I therefore know not a puniſhment which would be too ſevere for that man who would wiſh to introduce anarchy in place of order; who would ſet looſe the firm and compact order of our government; undermine its ſureſt ſupports, and render its beſt efforts for public proſperity abortive. I cannot ſay how far the ſocieties eſtabliſhed throughout the country, entertained ſuch treaſonable intentions; but in one thing I am decided, that though I ſaw many things in our political circumſtances which might admit of amendment, yet I never could ſuppoſe that the untutored underſtandings of thoſe people were equal to the taſk, or that it was fit our ſacred conſtitution ſhould be torn aſunder by their rugged hands, in order to be repaired. But without entering farther into thoſe particulars, I proceed, as immediately appertaining to the ſubject in hand, to ſtate and illuſtrate the following propoſition, viz. That the habits of intoxication are inconſiſtent with the plans or efforts of perſons diſpoſed to excite public diſcord; and that it never happened in this country, nor in any other country upon earth,

that men, addicted to intemperance, were ever connected with the contrivers or abettors of ſedition. Never ſince the creation, was ſedition or treaſon deviſed by ſuch men, nor were they employed as inſtruments of ſuch dark deſigns. Nor were men of this character ever employed for any purpoſe, whether good or bad, which tended to introduce confuſion into ſociety, or ſubvert the government of any country. Though, therefore, we were to allow, that the diſtilleries were the occaſion of every ſpecies of diſſipation and intemperance, they can never be juſtly accuſed as the cauſe of public diſcord. In proof of theſe poſitions, I have to remark, that the tempers and characters of mankind are found infinitely diverſified, and though this variety is not ſo much diſtinguiſhed amongſt them who have had the purſuits of their lives determined by the arbitrary appointment of their parents, by the manner of their education, and the preciſe line of buſineſs to which they have been directed, theſe having always a tendency greatly to affect their tempers and form their characters; yet, if by any means they have been brought to overleap theſe obſtructions, their real characters will ſoon diſplay themſelves, direct each movement of the mind, and influence the univerſal tenor of their conduct. Now I wiſh the reader particularly to obſerve the leading features of that character which is found prone to diſſipation, and he will conſtantly find, that nothing can be farther removed than it from a diſpoſition to plots and ſeditions, or dark and treaſonable crimes.

Young men find the firſt incitements to diſſipation

ariſe from the unbridled pleaſures which are offered them in the convivial hour, and theſe perſons are moſt in danger of ſeduction whoſe paſſions are keen and ardent, and whoſe imaginations are ſtrong and animated. Such men are often found endued with hearts alive to the moſt tender feelings of humanity; and the unregulated benevolence with which they are actuated, diſpoſes them ſtrongly to acts of mercy and compaſſion. Perſons of this character, whilſt they keep poſſeſſion of themſelves, are capable of great and good exertions; but they are by no means capable of guile. The trick of falſehood or deceit, is held by them in contempt, and their character, though often impetuous and fooliſh, is always open and undiſguiſed. Often have I ſeen the dreadful ravages which, in ſuch a mind, have been made by intemperance, when every good quality has been ſacrificed upon the unhappy ſhrine of pleaſure. Wandering in the deluſive paths of vice, they are often ſeen forgetting the firſt, the nobleſt, and deareſt obligations of their nature, till progreſſive intemperance entirely incapacitates them for doing either good or evil. But fix this man in any point you pleaſe in his progreſs in intemperance, and you ſhall never find that his diſſipation at any time ever prediſpoſes him for acts of cunning, or dark deſigns, or that ever it tends to inſpire him with cruelty or thirſt of blood. Even avarice itſelf can never ſo lay hold of his imagination, as to make him wiſh to raiſe a fortune upon the ruin of his country. In a moment of intoxication, he may be inſtigated or impelled to action, but no hold can be taken of him in

contradiction to the biaſs of his nature. Had he unwarily entered into the path of ſedition, his heart would execrate the deed, and he would quickly again be found in the ways of humanity and juſtice.

But though men had been differently formed, and nature had framed them for dark deſigns; were they capable of daring enterpriſe, devoid of every noble feeling; were they cruel, ſelfiſh, and ſecret; ſuppoſe ſuch men by any means introduced into the habits of diſſipation and drunkenneſs; though for a while this cold phlegmatic temper ſhould baffle the efforts of vice, and it might be ſometime before it could affect the vigour of their exertions, yet its natural ſtrong influence muſt at laſt prevail, and the powers of their minds, enervated by continued diſſipation, muſt at laſt be ſubdued before it. Whether theſe characters, then, are ſeen in high life, or amongſt the humbler ranks, in no ſhape will they be found prediſpoſed for bad deſigns or deeds of treaſon; for, if nature herſelf had modelled them for traitors, their habits would have ſet aſide her purpoſe, and rendered them incapable of compaſſing the deſign. The vice of habitual intemperance ſo deeply affects the mind, and ſo completely enfeebles all its powers, that it is in reality incapable of forming any plans but ſuch as tend to gratify the deſire for pleaſure. And moreover, improvident as they are, regardleſs of futurity, and diſengaged from every rational connection, they are not only unable to form bad deſigns themſelves, but they are unfit to be truſted with ſuch by any other perſon: The babbling moment would betray the ſecret, and ſuch imprudent

confidence would ſoon involve themſelves and their cauſe in ruin.

But farther, ſuch characters as theſe will be ever found equally incapable of execution as of deſign. Their bodily frame being equally enervated as their mental powers, in the moment of intoxication, the mad hour of delirious intemperance, they may be incited to ſome raſh, and even daring enterpriſe; but ſoon the fever of the blood abates, ſuſpended reaſon again reſumes its exertions, and ſuch men find themſelves languid and relaxed, unpleaſant to themſelves, and perfectly unfit even for being the inſtruments of any meaſures which require exertion, whether they be good or bad: A wiſe man will never ſolicit their aid in a virtuous enterpriſe; and the deep reflecting political traitor will never confide the execution of his ſchemes to their uncertain and irregular efforts. Indeed, their only exertions will, as I ſaid before, be directed to their pleaſures, which are the objects to which their habits lead them, and which have occupied their affections and engroſſed their attention and their time. Exertions which require attention, which require perſeverance, which require ſound heads and bad hearts, would be to ſuch men ſo great a burden, that they would ſicken at the very thought. They are ſo contradictory to their paſſion for hilarity and joy, that they would deteſt them. They would be ſo oppoſed to their ſocial habits, that it would be impoſſible to form them to their purpoſes. Theſe things being thus obvious, let me ſuppoſe, merely for ſake of argument, that the diſtilleries were the unhappy means of rivet-

ing the influence, and extending wide the contagion of diſſipation, by affording largely the means of indulgence; yet even upon that untrue ſuppoſition they muſt be entirely acquitted of being in the leaſt the occaſion of diſturbing the public tranquillity; and not only ſo, but I ſhould be rather apprehenſive that, if thus they corrupted the minds of men, they ought to be ſuppreſſed, becauſe, by their enervating influence, inſtead of exciting men to ſedition, they prepare a people for ſubmiſſion and ſlavery; a people fitly diſpoſed to lay proſtrate their necks at the feet of any tyrant, ſince ſuch men have not energy to reſiſt his feebleſt efforts to enſlave them.

This being the caſe, a debauched, diſſipated race could never excite the ſmalleſt apprehenſion in a Britiſh government. Such Engliſhmen or Scotchmen as theſe, would not only be incapable of giving diſturbance to the plans of government, but they would be even unworthy to ſerve our gracious ſovereign, the proud boaſt of whoſe heart is, that he reigns over a people inſpired with the love of liberty and virtue; who, whilſt liberty and virtue reign, will ſteadily ſupport the cauſe which is their own.

The doctrine which has been eſtabliſhed, as I think, upon the juſteſt principles, is not more true in theory than it is verified by facts; for, from the creation, there cannot be produced one ſingle inſtance wherein men, intoxicated with drink, or ſubject to the habits of intemperance, were ever ſeen deviſing or carying on, or capable of having a ſhare in, any enterpriſe which was intended to affect public tranquillity, or to

ſubvert ſocial order. I have traced in hiſtory, the riſe and fall of the Roman ſtate, and ſeen the republic, and the empire convulſed to the very centre. I have ſometimes found, in conſequence of commotions, the ſacred head of liberty lift up itſelf and ſend forth the complacent ſmiles of general peace, diffuſe wide the light of knowledge, give ſtrength to the arm of virtue, and ſpread joy and proſperity all around. I have alſo obſerved convulſions at other times, attended with rapine, blood, and horror, and tyrants exalted, triumphing in ſlavery, and in the miſeries of men*. But in no one inſtance does the inſtructive page of hiſtory attribute to intoxicated men the bleſſings or the horrors of the ſcene. The page of hiſtory has alſo led me through the Grecian ſtates, who, for ages, were the wonder and example of the world; a people who ſpeculated upon government and every other ſubject; and even *them* I found often ſubjected to revolutions, and diſtracted by commotions. But I never heard that theſe were occaſioned by the bachanalian revels of the drunkard, or men addicted to habits of intemperance.

The hiſtorian has alſo led me to Turkey, the ſeat of ignorance and barbariſm; and I have there had acceſs to contemplate ſcenes of unmixed horror, when the irreſiſtible fury of ungovernable multitudes have ſwept the moſt powerful monarchies to deſtruction; and ſovereigns, whoſe ſubjects have trembled at their name,

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* Cataline's conſpiracy may, by ſome, be thought an exception, but not juſtly. We know not the kind of intemperance in which the conſpirators indulged: it was not probably drunkenneſs; for they were ſecret; their debts drove them to deſperation, turmoil, and treaſon.

and kiſſed the ground before them, were driven from their thrones, and trampled in the duſt. Yet even in thoſe regions where popular frenzy is moſt intemperate, and its effects moſt dreadful and deſolating, where it has moſt frequently kindled, though it has never done good, or meliorated the ſtate of ſociety, a man intoxicated with drink, is nowhere to be found; for there wine is forbidden, and ſpirituous liquors are ſcarcely known.

When I return to this iſland, and trace its hiſtory from the earlieſt period, here likewiſe the ſame obſervation will be confirmed. In Britain, oft the miſerable theatre of civil diſcord, and ſcenes defiled with blood; where political conteſt has been the bane of national proſperity; where nobles have periſhed, and kings have been ſlain; there the people are impatient and irregular; inquiſitive, yet raſh; ardent for liberty, and jealous of their rights, yet ſubject to the caprice of the moment; there they have been frequently actuated by ſentiments which give dignity to men, and inſpired to deeds which only could be compaſſed by heroes; and at other times puſhed on by blind impetuoſity, have ſpread fruitleſs deſolation through the world, and even ſometimes torn their own inward frame with fierce convulſions. Here, when I review theſe various and awful ſcenes, I admire that aſpiring majeſty of public virtue which animates the ſouls of Britons; at the ſame time that I tremble to contemplate that raſhneſs which has frequently brought this country to the very brink of ruin; and I adore the Providence which then rode in the whirlwind and ruled the ſtorm,

and which has hitherto made every event conduce to the perfect eſtabliſhment of our deareſt liberties, and promote the high proſperity that we now enjoy. Whilſt my mind is filled with thoſe great proceedings, I would contaminate the page, did I try to trace them to ſo mean an original as intoxication or intemperance; or, were I to give ſuch importance to the ſons of mirth, as to ſuppoſe them even remotely connected with thoſe grand events. They are incapable of ſuch inſpiration; are unfit for ſuch achievements; their glory is confined within narrower bounds, to maltreat a watchman, to break a lamp, to diſturb the tranquillity of their peaceable drowſy neighbours with their Bacchanalian ſongs or nocturnal riots; to afford a ſpectacle of the degradation of human nature, and make themſelves the ſport of mere children in the ſtreets: Theſe are their honours, and here their ambition ends. I cannot poſſibly conceive how beings addicted to intemperance, ſhould have gained ſuch conſequence as to be thought capable of diſturbing the public tranquillity, or of endangering the ſafety of the ſtate. It never did, it never could happen. How then, upon the worſt ſuppoſition that can be formed concerning the diſtilleries, ſuppoſing they were the ſource of all intemperance; how, I ſay, can they be diſhonoured with ſo black an imputation as that of occaſioning political broils, or of ſapping the foundation of civil government? It is impoſſible.

I am very averſe from engaging any farther the reader's attention to thoſe ſocieties, or aſſociations, who ſome time ago made ſo conſpicuous an appear-

ance, and ſo much divided the opinions of mankind: But there is one thing which muſt be mentioned, as it appertains ſo directly to the point in queſtion. Though I never was preſent at any of their meetings, I am authoriſed by truth poſitively to ſay, that they were not collections of men, either noted for drinking, or intoxicated with liquor. A habitual drunkard was hardly, if ever, to be found included in their liſts: They were attended with unuſual ſolemnity, order, and quietneſs; and with them it was an eſtabliſhed regulation, that, during their aſſembly, none of them ſhould either eat or drink. Their enthuſiaſm was ſtrong and unenlightened; but it was not the enthuſiaſm of the drunkard, nor were their ſpeeches the ebullitions of mad intemperance. It is, therefore, impoſſible not to feel ſome contempt or indignation againſt thoſe weak or deſigning men, who have ſo far done outrage to truth, or wiſh to cover their nefarious views, as to lay the blame of the diſcontents and ſeditions which have ſpread ſo widely, to the cauſe of intemperance, and thereby to the diſtilleries. They themſelves know that theſe objects ever were, and muſt for ever continue, diſconnected.

With men of very different deſcriptions did theſe meetings originate, and by men very different from theſe have their principles been received, and their combinations ſupported. Deep thinking men, knowing in the characters of mankind, dark and impenerable; theſe, and ſuch as theſe alone, have ever been the ſubverters of public peace, and the tools they work with, are the fixed follies and inveterate paſſions

of their fellow men. With equal addreſs and ſucceſs can they make uſe of the high-ſouled enthuſiaſt, or the man benighted in the dark gloom of ſuperſtition; fledge the wings of daring ambition, or engage the heart which is hardened with avarice, mix the cup of poiſon to increaſe the miſeries of diſcontent, or lure to foul deeds of proweſs inconſiderate youth. They can combine theſe characters together, and make their united efforts aſſiſt them in compoſing their baſe deſigns; but by no poſſible art can they make the man addicted to habitual intemperance, aſſimilate with their diſpoſitions, or advance their views. Never, therefore, can the diſtilleries be juſtly accuſed of diſturbing the tranquillity of the country.

"But if this is the caſe, ſay the oppoſers of the diſtilleries, how has it happened, that theſe aſſociations abounded, and diſcord prevailed, whilſt the diſtilleries furniſhed an ample ſupply to the intemperate; and the moment they were ſuſpended, and the means of intemperance were acquired with more difficulty, that immediately theſe meetings were diſſolved, and tranquillity reſtored to the country? Does not this fact overturn the theories of ſpeculation, and force conviction, even in oppoſition to the experience of every former age, and alſo in defiance of the evidence ariſing from the characters and conduct of the aſſociators themſelves?"

The man who can propound ſuch an objection, is hardly worthy of an anſwer; but I will indulge his weakneſs, and remind him, that, amongſt that variety of plans, deviſed by the wiſdom of the Britiſh Parliament,

for the ſecurity of his Majeſty's perſon and government, the ſtopping of the diſtilleries was never thought of, and intelligent obſervers cannot have already forgotten the ſuſpenſion of the *habeas corpus* act, nor the paſſing of the bills which rendered thoſe aſſociations treaſonable, nor thoſe trials for treaſon and ſedition, in which our ſupreme criminal court, condemning the guilty, gave ſuch awful warnings to the deſigning or the inconſiderate. In theſe meaſures, ſurely, we behold a power ſufficient for the purpoſe; and our government will not reſt their praiſe for the internal tranquillity we now enjoy, on ſo trivial a circumſtance as the ſuſpenſion of the diſtilleries; and I am perſuaded our gentlemen peace officers, who were at that time enrolled in ſuch numbers, will not reſign the honour they have ſo juſtly acquired by the faithful performance of their duty, in preſerving the public peace, to a cauſe ſo flimſy and ridiculous. Much leſs can I believe, that the numerous corps of royal volunteers, firm in their loyalty, exact in their diſcipline, and formidable for their intrepidity, will yield their meed, and allow, that to ſuſpend the diſtilleries, was the only meaſure requiſite to reſtore and enſure the public quiet, and which would render their patriotic inſtitution uſeleſs. With ſuch tremenduous laws then, with ſuch bands of conſtables, with ſo many bodies of ſteady volunteers in every quarter; need any man be told what it is which gives vigour to our internal police, and preſerves the tranquillity of the ſtate? With theſe facts before us, it ſurely never can be alleged, that the diſtilleries were the occaſion of ſedition, or

that the ſuſpenſion of them was the cauſe of the reſtoration of peace and good order.

It muſt be obſerved, that hitherto, though the whole of this part of my argument, I have proceeded upon the ſuppoſition, that a general relaxation of principle, and general intemperance abounded in the country, and that the diſtilleries were the only or prime ſource of that abuſe. Yet, after all, it is not true, that a general intemperance prevails, or that the diſtilleries are alone the cauſe of theſe irregularities which are occaſionally diſcovered; for the ſtrong ale and porter of the brewers, are not uſed by the community ſimply as *cordials*. But now this ſuppoſition muſt be rejected; for even a ſemblance of falſehood muſt not be permitted to direct my pen. And here I think myſelf well authoriſed to aver, that the lower claſſes of the people are not generally depraved, nor generally immerſed in habits of drunkenneſs. Diſſipation is not a ſtriking characteriſtic of the under ranks in ſociety; and even where that bewitching vice and conſequent immoralities are found, they are ſo little occaſioned by the licenſed diſtilleries, in my opinion, that, if theſe be ſuppreſſed, or too ſeverely diſcouraged, the meaſure, however plauſible ſome may think it, would open upon us the flood-gates of wickedneſs, and introduce ſuch diſorders as would be truly alarming, and fatal to the deareſt moral intereſts of theſe realms. In confirmation of theſe ideas, I am now led to take a view of the connection of the diſtilleries, with the manners and morals of the country, eſpecially with thoſe of the inferior orders of men.

MORALS.

When I begin to deliberate concerning the moral ſtate of any country, I do not think myſelf authoriſed to ſit down in retired contemplation with the philoſophic moraliſt, to form a picture of what men may have been, or to pronounce upon what degree of perfection human nature might attain, if led by the hand of pure and uncontaminated reaſon. Neither am I to take the chair of the divine, honeſtly to hold forth the morals which are defined by law, where obligation is enforced by the perſuaſion of a world to come; for law gives no allowance for frailty, nor can it admit apology for vice. I muſt take the world as I find it, and eſtimate circumſtances as they appear before me; and, as I formerly remarked, I ſhall ever find, taking matters in this point of view, circumſtances affecting events, and theſe together forming the characters, and influencing the conduct of the human race. I am not, therefore, at all aſtoniſhed to find, upon one part of the globe, men ſhuddering with horror at the thought of eating the fleſh of any animal whatever, whilſt, in another place, I find them delighting to devour them even whilſt they are alive. I wonder not to find whole countries guarded againſt drinking wine, with religious deteſtation; whilſt, in others, men conſider a cheering glaſs amongſt the firſt comforts of life. I need not be informed, that a people bound under the iron hand of poverty, are generally parſimonious and temperate, whilſt abound-

ing wealth relaxes their attention to ſtrict economy, and leads them more readily to indulge in pleaſure.

In ſmall ſocieties, men, in general, are more virtuouſly temperate, than in large communities; and, in every inſtance, mankind are powerfully influenced by the circumſtances in which they are placed. Were it, indeed, in my power, this ſhould not be the caſe. I would wiſh to reform the follies of mankind, and inſpire them with wiſdom: I would eradicate their vices, and give them a true taſte for virtue: I would baniſh their evil habits, and train them in the ways of truth. No circumſtances, no time, no place, ſhould then form diſtinctions in the characters of human virtue; for, I am well aſſured, that virtue is always one and unchangeable. But, to effect this perfect reformation, reaſon and religion have been employed in vain: and I am afraid, till the concluding ſcene, every effort to attain it will be fruitleſs; for man is imperfect, and ſubject to continual change. When he thinks himſelf wiſeſt, he is the ſport of circumſtances; and, with the great body of mankind, ſituation and circumſtances, independent of themſelves, for the moſt part, form their opinions, their habits, their characters, and the general tenor of their conduct.

Now, in Great Britain, men are far advanced in knowledge, in riches, and refinement; they enjoy all the ſolid advantages of cultivated ſociety, of ſettled induſtry, and extenſive commerce. I find them at this very time ſignally diſplaying the virtues which are the offſpring of ſuch proſperous circumſtances:

Their ſouls are inſpired with a generous philanthropy; and the hand of benevolence and mercy is freely and generouſly ſtretched out, to aſſiſt the needy: They are ardent in the purſuits of fame; and, with generous indignation, they ſpurn at the idea of diſhonour. Mankind with us, though but lately, are emancipated from the trammels of ſuperſtition; and have eſcaped from the pleaſing, though deceitful labyrinths of enthuſiaſm. Antiquity now does not ſtamp a value upon opinion; and, to be free from prejudice, is the boaſt of every even half-taught witling.

When ſuch, then, are the acquirements of ſociety amongſt us, is it not natural for us to expect to ſee them purſuing thoſe enjoyments which are now put within their eaſy reach, by ſuch a change of circumſtances? We do not, therefore, wonder to ſee them dreſſed in the ſilks of Perſia, or the elegant muſlins of India; we even expect to ſee the diamonds of Golconda, and the furs from the foreſts of America, uniting, to diſplay our attainments in elegance and taſte. Our advancement in civilization gives ſplendor and elegance to our buildings, our gardens, and our tables. Amidſt all this virtuous attainment and pleaſurable acquirement, is there any man will ſay he could reaſonably expect to find amongſt us the ſimplicity which attends upon ignorance, the parſimony which proceeds from want, the patience which is taught by neceſſity, or that univerſal regularity of conduct which muſt ever accompany limited circumſtances and circumſcribed deſires? Will not rather experience tell us, that the God of Nature balances the advantages and

diſadvantages of every ſituation and period in which humanity has been placed; and, therefore, to weigh againſt our ſplendid acquirements, and our increaſed opportunities of enjoyment, our ſenſibilities to miſery, and our opportunities and proneneſs to peculiar vices, have been enlarged or increaſed? Whoever attends to what paſſes amongſt men, muſt have ſeen that variety of ſentiments which diſtinguiſh the ſuperior from the inferior orders of mankind? Who has not noticed the different manner in which objects affect them with pleaſure or with pain? And who has not concluded, that the different ranks may be diſtinguiſhed by their different virtues, and their different vices? Though human nature is the ſame in all, and the great traces of the family character is preſerved, which marks them brothers; yet, from the difference in their circumſtances, we expect to find their vices and their virtues preciſely diſtinguiſhed. If, then, this train of obſervation be true, has not the ſagacious reader already anticipated the inference which muſt neceſſarily follow, That, whatever diſſipation is found amongſt us, it is not to be attributed to the eſtabliſhment of the diſtilleries; but has neceſſarily been produced by a long train of circumſtances and events, which have collected multitudes of men together in ſociety, increaſed their deſire of ſocial intercourſe and enjoyment, and adminiſtered opportunity to varied indulgence? So far, therefore, from imputing the intemperance found amongſt us to the diſtilleries, may we not rather ſay, that the train of circumſtances which has ſuperinduced ſo total a change upon the face of ſociety,—which has

led men to indulge their appetites ſo much without reſtraint,—that this very train of circumſtances, which preſents to our view ſociety in its preſent ſtate, ſo knowing, ſo refined, and elegant, is the very thing which has given being to the diſtilleries themſelves; for they commenced with the dawnings of knowledge and refinement, have increaſed with their progreſs, and will be perfected in their perfection? But, though I had the beſt reaſon to ſay, that we might expect, in the progreſs of ſociety, and in theſe pleaſures and diſpoſitions which attend upon that progreſs, that the deſire of cordial exhilarating liquors might find too great a place in the ſocial circles; yet, even in that indulgence, the vice is leſs intolerable,—the preſent refinement of manners will mix with inebriety itſelf,—and men, deprived of their reaſonable powers, will retain ſo much of the general impreſſion of ſocial obligation, as to prevent the rough unmannerly expreſſions of their folly, and more eſpecially preſerve them from thoſe atrocious crimes to which, by intemperate rudeneſs, they might be impelled. I am ſure there is not an old man who has obſerved accurately former times, but muſt give his teſtimony to this obſervation, which ſo diſtinctly characterizes the manners of the age. He finds but little of that coarſe diſguſting language which was then the boaſt of the intemperate; ſtill leſs of that boiſterous and ferocious indulgence of paſſion which formerly made the ſocial hour an hour of danger; which brought on unextinguiſhable feuds, and ended often in bloodſhed and death. Such horrors ſeldom now mark the riots of the moſt diſorderly;

and whether it be, becauſe of this diſtinction, or becauſe it is really in itſelf true, I am led to believe, that the vice of drunkenneſs is leſs frequent, and, when it does occur, leſs vicious, than it was in former times. How, then, can the diſtilleries ſtand charged with corrupting the morals, and increaſing the vices, of ſociety? But I muſt be allowed to go farther; and accuſe thoſe men of peeviſhneſs of temper, who ſo freely condemn the preſent age for the vice of intemperance, and eſpecially attach the accuſation to the lower claſſes of mankind. I will neither make compariſons with former times, nor need I make compariſons with other countries. Scotland is the place pointed at, as moſt addicted to this: The lower claſſes amongſt us are ſuppoſed to be moſt intemperate; and diſtilled ſpirits are conſidered as the temptation which betrays them into the commiſſion of it.

This is, upon the whole, a perfect miſrepreſentation. Let it be conſidered, that drunkenneſs is an open, noiſy, and obtruſive vice, which is neither capable of concealment, nor diſpoſes a man to conceal his folly: Let it be remembered, that the appearance of one, two, or three perſons, intoxicated, and reeling through the different ſtreets of our wide metropolis, that theſe poor wretches attract the general attention, are quickly followed by multitudes, who expoſe their folly more obviouſly to view, and occaſion their becoming the objects of common obloquy. But, after all, what are the inconſiderable few who thus are guilty, compared with the innumerable multitudes who are untainted with this folly, and are far removed from

habitual intemperance? or, why ſhould the vices of the few attach and ſtain the general character of the moſt numerous claſs of our fellow-ſubjects? I am proud to ſay it, and it is without a poſſibility of being contradicted, that ninety-nine parts of the lower orders of the community are untainted with this vice; and there is not a peaſantry in Europe more ſober, and, upon the whole, more virtuous, than the peaſantry of Scotland. The manufacturers and the mechanics are alike entitled to this praiſe: The middling ranks of life are not leſs diſtinguiſhed for ſobriety and induſtry. I allow, it is true, that there are many diſſolute, profligate, abandoned wretches, ſeen daily in our ſtreets, infeſting every corner; and I allow, that amongſt them are found manufacturers and mechanics of every branch of buſineſs, who are idle and diſſipated; who often fill up the time not employed in the commiſſion of more flagrant crimes, in drunkenneſs and riot. But theſe are not ſufficient to mark the character of the plebeian ranks; who, upon the whole, are ſober, orderly, and induſtrious. To this, indeed, they are impelled by neceſſity; but neceſſity has formed their habits, and theſe have fixed their characters.

It is not to be wondered at, that in great cities many perſons are to be found profligate and debauched; for thither every one flies, who is, as it were, driven by his vices from the pure ſociety of country reſidence; who, by his imprudence, has waſted his ſubſtance; of whom his friends and country are aſhamed: Theſe fly to the great cities, to hide themſelves from obſervation,

in the midſt of multitudes of men; theſe fly to live upon the innumerable follies which are there committed; there they go, to find ſhelter to their crimes, which could not be concealed in leſs numerous ſocieties; there they find employment without a character, and almoſt certain bread, without a maſter to controul their appetite for diſſipation.

Is it poſſible that any candid man can lay this concourſe of corruption to the charge of the diſtilleries? Will any honeſt man ſay the diſtilleries trained theſe men in the road to deſtruction? It is true, in intoxicating liquors they found an indulgence of their propenſities; ſo does every thing become more corrupt in the hands of the corrupted; but the diſtilleries are innocent of their ruin. I am told, that, ſince the diſtilleries have been ſuſpended, ſince ſpirits have become dearer, and more difficult to be obtained, that there are fewer men amongſt us addicted to intemperance, fewer atrocious crimes are now committed, and fewer mechanics or manufacturers are found idling away their time, deſerting their work, and leaving their families diſtreſſed in want of neceſſary ſubſiſtence. All this, I confeſs, is true; but I will not allow that it is the ſuſpenſion of the diſtilleries which has occaſioned this happy proſpect of reform; nor do I believe the continuance of this ſuſpenſion would either promote or ſecure this deſirable object. We all well know, that theſe kingdoms have, for ſome time paſt, been engaged in a very extenſive war; and there are none of us who have need to be informed, that immenſe numbers of our men have been called forth to fight the battles of their

country. We all know that the levies for the army are moſt readily ſupplied from amongſt the idle, the diſſolute, and immoral. Immorality, indeed, is far from being requiſite in the character of a ſoldier; but it is certain, that from that deſcription of men the ranks are moſt eaſily filled up. Theſe idle and diſſipated perſons being thus removed, we aſſuredly find our ſtreets more regular and ſafe, riots leſs frequently happen, and crimes are leſs frequently committed; but will any man of common ſenſe ſay that this is a conſequence of the ſuſpenſion of the diſtilleries? I might as well be told that the diſtilleries were the occaſion of the war. Farther, The ſtagnation of credit, which happened ſome time ago, occaſioned a great ſtagnation in our manufactures, and multitudes of our weavers and mechanics were neceſſarily diſmiſſed from their employments, who moſtly inliſted in our fleets and armies; but the ſober, the induſtrious, and active, were kept ſtill in employment by their attentive maſters. If, in conſequence of this, theſe gentlemen now find the average work performed by their workmen is, in proportion to their numbers and the time employed, greater than before the idle and worthleſs were diſmiſſed, is this to be attributed to the ſuſpenſion of the diſtilleries? The idea is ridiculous.

But let it farther be conſidered, that the common people are generally thoughtleſs and improvident: If, then, ſuch people, with nothing in ſtore, find the price of the neceſſaries of life nearly doubled, and a general ſcarcity prevail through the country, and that it requires from them a double exertion of their induſtry

to ſupply their families with bread; if we ſee them, in conſequence, more ſober, and more attentive to their daily work, will this kind of reformation be alſo attributed to the ſuſpenſion of the diſtilleries? Any man would be aſhamed to hold ſuch abſurd poſitions. It was not, ſurely, to that ſuſpenſion, and the dearneſs of ſpirits conſequent upon it, but to the war, and the ſcarcity of bread, that we muſt attribute the apparent reformation which took place; a reformation which, unleſs famine and war ſhould continue to deſolate the country, will prove but deluſive, though the diſtilleries were aboliſhed for ever.

But I proceed to demonſtrate a ſtill bolder propoſition upon this head; a propoſition in which every man of good principles and humanity muſt feel warmly intereſted; and it is this: That if the diſtilleries are either much diſcouraged or ſuppreſſed, this meaſure will occaſion ſtill more numerous and greater immoralities than what are now lamented; immoralities bearing the darkeſt complexion of guilt, dreadful in their nature and extent, and almoſt irremediable in their concluſion.

A wiſe man, when he has a choice of good before him, chooſes the beſt; and, when he is threatened with two evils, one of which he cannot poſſibly avoid, he cheerfully will ſubmit himſelf to the leaſt, in order to avoid the greateſt. Upon this principle, though I were to allow, on the one hand, that the diſtillers could not carry on their buſineſs without, in ſome meaſure, infecting a certain proportion of mankind with diſſipated and immoral propenſities, and victims were daily

ſeen falling under their pernicious influence, yet, if on the other hand, we were aſſured that the ſuppreſſion of them would occaſion a more groſs depravity of manners, would ſpread wider the immoral influence, and bring to deſtruction greater numbers of the human race, what man of humanity or virtue could heſitate a moment which of the two arrangements to eſtabliſh. It is my intention to ſhow the truth of the laſt hypotheſis.

I hope the attentive reader ſtill recollects, that, when I mentioned the connection of the diſtilleries with the revenue of the crown, I took notice of the inevitable increaſe of ſmuggling which would aſſuredly take place, if the diſtilleries ſhould ever be ſeverely diſcountenanced. I then beheld the object in its important effects upon the revenue, and I felt much concerned in the injury which might thus befal the public; but, when I contemplate it in its moral influence, leſſer impreſſions in ſome meaſure vaniſh, and the mind is filled with the more affecting alarm. Let me now, then, ſuppoſe that the ſmuggling trade was ſet thoroughly afloat; that the ſmugglers covered our ſeas with their ſhips, and filled our coaſts with their ſpirits, —ſurely, upon this ſuppoſition, the country would be in no better ſituation than if they were ſupplied by the diſtilleries; for the ſpirits would be equally plentiful and cheap, which would equally affect the morals of the inhabitants. But I attend more eſpecially to the vaſt numbers of men engaged in this illicit traffic; and I feel a degree of ſickening horror, when I reflect but a moment upon what ſort of men theſe muſt be, and

what are the diſpoſitions and actions to which they will be naturally led, in the neceſſary courſe of their unhappy engagements.

The traffic of the ſmuggler is illicit, hazardous, and daring: the bold and daring only will undertake it. It puts them ſtraightway out of the peace and protection of their country: the lawleſs, therefore, and the deſperate, will quickly unite themſelves to theſe lawleſs ſocieties: among them, perſons guilty of the moſt enormous crimes, will expect to find a ſafe aſylum. Their buſineſs is a warfare againſt regulated ſociety: they are, therefore, enemies to their country; and, in the proſecution of their bold, their lawleſs enterpriſes, they will regard every one who ſhall oppoſe them as an enemy; and thus ſhall they ſoon become accuſtomed to blood and murder. The perpetual hazard of the boiſterous ſeas, the hazard of ruin, captivity, and death, to all which they are expoſed, will keep their minds perpetually up to the high tone of deſperation, and will create a character ſuch as is fitted to fill the mind with horror, where every virtuous ſentiment is loſt in the whirlwind, and every vicious tendency is inflamed to madneſs. Think now, I am not here ſpeaking of one only, or a few wretches devoted to deſtruction; I ſpeak of thouſands, of many thouſands, of the human race, of our countrymen, who would thus be loſt to ſociety, loſt to themſelves, and loſt for ever. How would the man of virtue, the man of humanity, lament the ruin, and lament the narrow policy, the blind prejudices, by which it would be produced! But thoſe who oppoſe them-

ſelves to our concluſion come forward here, and tell us, that we have amuſed or terrified ourſelves with a phantom, and talked of events which cannot take place; for ſuch, ſay they, will be the power of our well regulated policy, and ſo carefully will the ſeas be guarded, that the ſmuggler will find diſcouragement to his enterpriſe in every quarter, and every attempt to ſmuggling will be ſoon relinquiſhed: But this is idle boaſting: the expectation would be fallacious; for no interpoſition would prevent the attempt, no power prevent its partial ſucceſs: All the efforts of government has never yet been able, and they never will be able, to accompliſh it. Even now, when the ports of Holland are ſhut againſt us, and, in conſequence of the war, the ſeas are covered with our well-appointed and vigilant cruiſers, the ſmugglers are not deterred from our coaſts: What then muſt be the caſe when the Dutch and French coaſts ſhall be laid open by a general peace, and the number and vigilance of our cruiſers ſhall be diminiſhed? I am certain the ſmuggler never will be deterred; and the utmoſt vigilance will have no other effect than to make him more active to prevent diſcovery, or more daring in his defence, if he is diſcovered. The market, at any rate, will be ſtill ſupplied; the vices amongſt the people, ſuppoſed to be occaſioned by ſpirits found in plenty in every corner, and at a moderate price, muſt ſtill prevail, with this ſad, this dreadful addition, that the vaſt multitudes of people engaged in the ſmuggling trade, whoſe very occupations lead them to every vicious exceſs, and to the

commiſſion of crimes ſtained with the deepeſt enormity; theſe multitudes, theſe unhappy men, muſt end in ruin. But though, for the ſake of argument, I were now to ſuppoſe that it were poſſible to guard the ſeas, and to prevent any ſmuggler from approaching our coaſts, can any man, who is acquainted with human nature, ſay, that the people, for that reaſon, would renounce the uſe of ſpirits? In this northern climate will they ſubmit to this? Will they relinquiſh their habits, confirmed for ages? I am thoroughly convinced no power, no poſſible exertion, can form or complete an arrangement to effect this purpoſe.

The Emperor of Ruſſia, poſſeſſed of deſpotic power, and at that very time in all things elſe moſt willingly obeyed throughout his vaſt dominions, was nearly ſhaken from his throne, in conſequence of his iſſuing a capricious command, ordering his ſubjects to cut off their beards; and to this day this edict is hardly thought of in the Ruſſian dominions. The political Queen Elizabeth, who was little leſs arbitrary than political, enjoined her ſubjects not to eat butcher meat for two days every week, confining them upon theſe to fiſh and vegetables; but, though ſhe gave a reaſon for her command, and told them this was good for their health and morals, and was neceſſary for the more eaſy victualling her fleets, yet neither ſupreme authority, nor the reaſons offered, could obtain ſubmiſſion to this arbitrary princeſs. The Romans in their glory, and the emperors of Rome in their decline, and the kings of France at various times, created confuſion in the traffic of their ſeveral countries, and

much diſcontent amongſt the people, by endeavouring to eſtabliſh ſumptuary laws; but never for any length of time were theſe laws obeyed. Men may be enticed from their habits, but they will not be compelled. Even ſo it will be found with us. Let the licenſed diſtilleries be ſuppreſſed; let the ſmuggling of foreign ſpirits be completely prevented; yet will the full demand of the country be ſupplied by the unremitting efforts of domeſtic illicit diſtillers; and theſe, paying no duty either for ſpirits made from malt or molaſſes *, will ſerve the country at a price greatly inferior to what could be done by the licenſed diſtiller. Upon this plan, then, will the morals of the people be improved? Will this tend to ſecure the ſobriety and temperance of the lower orders in the community? It is impoſſible.

I already noticed the infinite prejudice which might be done to the intereſts of virtue, by the ſmuggling of foreign ſpirits into the country; but, believe me, the unlicenſed diſtilleries, were they prevailing here, would alſo be woefully productive of immoral influence. Truly there are other immoralities amongſt men beſides drunkenneſs. Without that, deeply may the human mind be corrupted, and the conduct ſtained. The whole illicit traffic of diſtillation is a traffic of pilfering and ſecrecy. Confidence is acquired by bribery; and by this men are engaged to lie, to deceive, to perjure themſelves; and every thing is outraged which is valuable, and gives confidence to man with man. When

* Molaſſes are generally uſed in towns by thoſe illicit diſtillers, becauſe they are not ſo liable to detection in the manufacture.

the mind is thus far corrupted, it is of little conſequence what principles he pretends to retain, and there is ſcarce a probability that he will retain any that are valuable; and if he is a ſober man, he will only be the more completely a villain. Now, the depravity here mentioned is of a dangerous and extenſive ſpread; thouſands may be involved in it: It goes deep into ſociety, and tends to a general corruption. Conſider the continual exhibition occaſioned by this trade of cunning rewarded, of lies applauded, of perjuries forgiven; how fatally, by ſuch examples, would the natural horror, the juſt deteſtation of ſuch crimes, be diminiſhed amongſt men, till their enormity would be forgotten, and every virtuous impreſſion be defaced. As to the ſmugglers themſelves, few of them would be profited, moſt of them would be ruined, and caſt debaſed upon ſociety, without principle, without habits of induſtry, unhappy in themſelves, and incapable of being uſeful to others. Such are the morals, which, amongſt the common people, would certainly be found the conſequence of the ſuppreſſion, or even the diſcouragement of the diſtilleries; immoralities atrocious indeed, which, deſcending from that unhappy meaſure, would, without the poſſibility of prevention, deluge the people.

Thus have I done more than ſhow the diſtilleries innocent of being the occaſion of what diſſipation prevails amongſt us: I have demonſtrated that tenfold deeper depravity and blacker crimes would be the fatal conſequence of their ſuppreſſion.

CONCLUSION.

The objections againſt the diſtilleries, which I have now conſidered, when they firſt engaged my attention, made a deep impreſſion upon my mind; and I was rather diſpoſed to think, that no public advantages which could be derived from that manufacture, ought to preponderate againſt evils ſo momentuous; and that, at every hazard, the health, tranquillity, and morals of the people ought to be preſerved. Theſe impreſſions were no ways leſſened, when, in various companies, I had occaſion, on account of one or other of theſe objections, to hear the diſtilleries treated with much aſperity. But, as I never willingly take up my opinions raſhly, far leſs allow them to be influenced by popular declamation, I made theſe matters the ſubject of my ſerious inveſtigation; and the concluſions I have ſtated are the reſult of full conviction. This being the caſe, I will not ſurely be thought preſumptuous, though I entertain the hope, that others will be convinced, and my concluſions be ſupported by the general opinion. May I not alſo hope, that thinking men, having ſeen the importance of the diſtilleries to the agriculture, commerce, and revenue of the kingdom, will be particularly pleaſed to obſerve, that theſe great advantages, offered by this manufacture, may be attained with perfect ſafety to the beſt intereſts of ſociety?

Having thus accompliſhed the object I had in view, I intended, without adding any thing farther, to have left the reader to the impreſſions made upon

his mind: but, ſince what I formerly ſtated has gone to the preſs, I feel myſelf called upon, by circumſtances which have occurred, to addreſs myſelf to thoſe perſons whom I conſider moſt intereſted in the ſubject under diſcuſſion.

Being fully informed reſpecting the ſubſtance of the ſpeech of the Right Honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when, in opening up the budget, he took particular notice of the Scotch diſtilleries, I there diſcovered two particulars, which I had occaſion to remark with much concern: The firſt was his public declaration, that, from numerous and moſt reſpectable authorities, he had received ſuch information concerning the bad effects which the diſtilleries have had upon the morals of the lower claſſes of the people in Scotland, that, were it not for their importance to the revenue, he was diſpoſed to impoſe ſuch a tax upon the trade, as might prove nearly its extinction: and the ſecond was, that he had, in fact, under the influence of theſe informations, reſolved to lay fifty-four pounds upon the gallon of the contents of the ſtills, which may probably operate to that very end.

Notwithſtanding what I ſaid formerly to that point, I feel myſelf impelled to do juſtice to the common people of Scotland. The Right Honourable Chancellor may reſt aſſured, that the commonalty of Scotland are not a diſſipated and immoral people: There is not a peaſantry in Europe ſo well informed, ſo attached to religion, ſo attentive to the duties of it, or, in general, ſo free

from immoral propenſities. Our manufacturers are expoſed to greater temptations, being collected together in great towns, and in greater bodies, yet are they far more regular than any other ſet of men, in any country, in ſimilar circumſtances. I appeal to the clergy, who know the people of the country well: I appeal to the farmers, who are well acquainted with the conduct of their ſervants: I appeal even to the officers of the army, if the regiments raiſed in Scotland, though ſurely not collected from the moſt virtuous of the people, have not univerſally behaved themſelves with equal, if not with greater ſobriety than any body of men in the Britiſh ſervice: I appeal to that proſperity which, for years paſt, has attended our agriculture and our manufactures,—which has been beyond our hopes, and even beyond calculation;—and no man can be perſuaded, that this proſperity has been owing to a diſſipated people; for proſperity and intemperance were never ſeen conjoined;—and no information ſhould perſuade, that the Scotch, who have long approved themſelves to be an intelligent, laborious, perſevering, and induſtrious people, can at the ſame time be a diſſipated and immoral race, or that they are ſo entirely corrupted by the diſtilleries.

However, as the matter now ſtands before me, under the impreſſion of thoſe ſentiments which have been expreſſed by the Right Honourable Miniſter, and alarmed, as I am, at the danger which impends over the intereſts of the country, I think it right, that thoſe who are moſt directly concerned in the

ſubject, ſhould take into their immediate conſideration the meaſures now propoſed. I am ſure our honeſt farmers will not be indifferent to ſuch an important concern. Tell me then, freely, with that plainneſs and integrity which ever ought to characterize your ſtation, what impreſſion it would make upon your minds, did you hear, that, by the irreſiſtible authority of Parliament, the *Scotch diſtilleries were to be ſuppreſſed?* Would you not think the denunciation fatal to your proſperity? Tell me, had you foreſeen ſuch an event, would you have covenanted for the rents you preſently pay for your farms? Did ſuch a meaſure actually take effect, do you think you would be able to pay the rents to which you are now bound? would you be able to improve your farms, to carry on a ſpirited and profitable huſbandry? Is it not a certain market, and an equal price, which makes your induſtry repay you? I firmly hope you will not now ſuffer the complaints of any ſet of men, however well intentioned, to deprive you of the benefit of a manufacture ſo intimately connected with your own proſperity, and that of the country at large.

Moſt reſpectfully alſo would I beg leave to call the attention of the landholders, eſpecially of Scotland, to this important ſubject. And whether ye feel your minds actuated by patriotiſm, or a regard to your perſonal concerns, to you it is a ſubject of the greateſt moment. Your minds are formed by a liberal education; you are animated by the ſplendid rank you hold in ſociety; ye have abilities and time

for inveſtigation and reſearch; ye have much to loſe, and much to gain; the proſperity of your country, therefore, muſt affect you deeply. Now, the more attentively you deliberate, the more clear and juſt the ideas are which you conceive, the more warmly ye feel yourſelves intereſted in the public proſperity, ſo earneſtly will you feel yourſelves diſpoſed to ſupport the intereſts of the diſtilleries. A flouriſhing agriculture, an extenſive commerce, a large productive revenue, theſe would ever accompany a proſperous diſtillery; and theſe can never fail to engage the attention of the thinking, the judicious landholder. But, after you have given theſe ideas their full weight, think but a moment how deeply your perſonal intereſts are concerned in the ſubject, and this will be deciſive of your conduct. A flouriſhing tenantry, an improved eſtate, an increaſed rental, and regular payments, theſe are the effects of a proſperous diſtillery; and to theſe circumſtances you cannot poſſibly be indifferent. Ye are too wiſe not to perceive, and too prudent not to purſue, the path which is ſo exactly marked, and which ſo plainly leads to your emolument. You are too well informed to allow any circumſtance, reſpecting the preſent ſtate of markets, to delude you into a belief that things will remain for ever in their preſent ſituation, and that there is not a poſſibility of falling prices bringing on a fall of rents. The time is yet full in my remembrance when great quantities of barley were ſhipped from this country for Norway and other ports, at a price ſo low as eight ſhillings per boll. *Recollect the*

fact, and beware. Be aſſured an export trade of grain will never enſure the profits of the farmer, or the rents of the landlord: The very idea of depending upon it is big with misfortune to the intereſts of both. Barley is a *great rent-paying* article; and no manufacture in Scotland is nearly of ſuch importance as the diſtilleries are in the conſumption of that article. The diſtilleries can alone aſſure your maket and your price; for the conſumption by them is ſteady and equal: its influence is not confined to a corner, it pervades the iſland: it is even a defence againſt unpropitious ſeaſons, and gives a value to corns which are damaged, and would otherwiſe be loſt.

Suppoſe, then, your tenants were deprived of this reſource, what would be the conſequence? You would ſee them diſpirited and unhappy, living in poverty, and in a perpetual terror of their terms of payment. You would ſee ſequeſtrations and miſery hovering around them: Your fields would lie ill cultivated; your rents ill paid; your rental diminiſhed; and all going into confuſion and diſtreſs. And for what are all theſe misfortunes to be incurred, and all the oppoſite advantages to be relinquiſhed? Some gentlemen, indeed, have been miſled by falſe and intereſted information from brewers, or from ſhort-ſighted men, who, being incapable of looking deeper, have thought proper to attribute the diſcontents, which ſome time ago prevailed in the country, to the intemperate uſe of ſpirits amongſt the commonalty, and they, therefore, became anxious for the preſer-

vation of the morals of the people: But the enlightened landholders of Scotland are not to be thus deceived: Ye know better things, and will not ſuffer the eſtabliſhment of a meaſure, which would prove ſo detrimental to all concerned; for it is yours to guard both your own and the intereſts of the community. Ye are poſſeſſed of wiſdom to deviſe, and ſpirit to purſue, the proper meaſures upon a conjuncture ſo important; and to your active exertions I leave the cauſe.

Moſt probably my feeble voice may never reach the ear, nor engage the attention of our miniſtry; but, if I thought this might happen, I would take the opportunity to expreſs the high reſpect which my heart feels for the government of the country. It is always my moſt earneſt wiſh that I may be enabled to approve their meaſures; and, when I cannot help doing otherwiſe, I would differ from them in opinion with candour, and wiſh to ſee every other perſon do the ſame. The government of Great Britain is founded in the principles of true patriotiſm: the happineſs, the proſperity, and numbers of the people, are its ſtrength: and an adminiſtration which acts upon theſe principles, will not be deluded by a partial view of circumſtances, will not be affected by prejudices, will know no partialities. The Right Honourable Mr. Pitt, therefore, I am perſuaded, will not long continue in the opinion he has formed of the diſtilleries. Having received better information, and thought maturely, he will with pleaſure behold this manufacture extending its beneficial in-

fluences over the community: It will give him particular ſatisfaction to ſee it remunerate the encouraging and ſupporting hand of government with a large and well ſecured revenue. The diſtilleries, therefore, will not with him ſoon loſe their conſequence; nor will he ſee them loaded with oppreſſive taxes, inconſiſtent with their proſperity; for theſe would render the hopes of every benefit from them to the revenue completely abortive; as high duties muſt of neceſſity throw the trade into the ſmuggler's hands.

Upon the whole, then, whilſt agriculture, commerce, and the public revenue, are eſteemed objects of importance; whilſt the means of improving, extending, and eſtabliſhing them, are conſidered of real value to the community; that is to ſay, whilſt reaſon and truth have power, and are attended to; the diſtilleries will be eſteemed a manufacture well meriting the general regard, protection, and ſupport of the community.

FINIS.